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CURRENT COMMENT.

SENATOR SPENCER of Missouri seems to have "gotten something on" the Administration, in showing that President Wilson promised the Premier of Rumania in the spring of 1919, that if Rumania or Serbia were attacked, the United States would send ships and soldiers to the rescue. The Administration denies this, naturally, but furnishes no evidence either way, saying that it has no report of the meeting at which this matter was discussed; yet the French Foreign Office says that each Government was given the minutes of the meeting, intimating that President Wilson probably has a copy in his bottom drawer. This makes rather an awkward mess for Brother Cox, since the League of Nations has been pushed to the fore as the paramount issue, and Article X is under particularly strong fire just now.

AND yet, what is there in Senator Spencer's revelations that is either shocking or surprising? No doubt Mr. Wilson made such a promise, many such promises perhaps—why not? No doubt also that any other man who could be elected President, and was willing to be elected, would have made the same promise under similar circumstances. No doubt, further, that were it not for purely political purposes—purposes that have nothing to do with public welfare, honour, public morals, least of all with decency, Mr. Wilson might have gone on making just such promises and keeping them, unchallenged and immune. Mr. Wilson's successors will continue to do precisely as much of this sort of thing as may be needed, from time to time, to bolster the integrity of privilege; because that, primarily, is what they are there for.

WE do not count ourselves among Mr. Wilson's defenders, but we have contempt for morbid cant. An officeholder under a political government must act according to the terms of his undertaking. There is scarcely anything dishonest, disreputable and wicked but that the poor man must at some time turn his hand to. Organized murder, organized theft, organized lying, treachery, deceit—all these elevated enterprises occasionally, if not regularly, fall his way. To put a man in that position, and then get into a great sweat of moral indignation over some mere detail of his day's work, like Mr. Wilson's promise to M. Bratiano, seems supremely silly. To cast him out, put another man in precisely the same posi-

tion, under precisely the same exigencies, and expect that the other man will act in any essentially different way under the pressure of those exigencies, is utterly fantastic. It seems incredible that any observer of practical politics, who has the sense he was born with, could have any patience with such nonsense.

THIS attack of Senator Spencer's may be the first move towards a general airing of the Administration's foreign commitments. We think it probably is that. The prospect is entertaining enough in its way for such as have a partisan appetite, or an indiscriminate appetite, for public scandal. For the reasons intimated above, our own interest is quite languid. If it will help the Republicans any, we may recall to them that in our issue of 14 April we drew attention to a little matter of this kind that they might like to ventilate; namely, M. André Tardieu's statement that Mr. Wilson had agreed with M. Clemenceau that France should occupy the Rhine Provinces indefinitely if the Senate failed to ratify the peace-treaty. While on the subject, we might also ask our Republican friends to look into the subject of the "gentlemen's agreement" between this country and England and France, back in McKinley's time, as set forth in the first paragraph of the tenth chapter of Professor Roland P. Usher's book called "Pan-Germanism." Professor Usher makes a categorical statement; his book was published some time before the war; as far as we know, he is alive and well, and can be had up on the carpet to show his authority or lack of authority; and finally, the diplomatic conduct he there describes is of much more serious consequence than that attributed to Mr. Wilson in his confab with M. Bratiano. McKinley, certainly, was a Republican; but should this weigh against the high public duty of exposing underhanded and abominable diplomatic intrigue? Never. Who would think such a consideration possible in the Senate of the United States? It is because we have such utter confidence in the patriotic integrity of our Republican friends that we so cheerfully give them this bit of information to put alongside Senator Spencer's.

THE idea of the international financiers, as nearly as we can make it out, seems to be to set the League of Nations up in the banking business; to organize, that is, a sort of international credit scheme. We are notably out of our depth when it comes to talking about finance, but in our ignorance, we can not see much relief coming out of an international credit plan unless some of the nations represented have some credit. But the plan may be a good one, for all that; we do not pretend to criticize. The only thing that makes us a little sceptical, is that the League has heretofore been invested with so many powers and functions that made first-rate reading; but somehow, the means to carry them on seemed always lacking. The League has had laid upon it everything from preventing war to organizing tourist-traffic. It is the factotum, the Figaro, of civilization. Everyone tells his troubles to the League; perhaps, rather than Figaro, it might be called the international Sweeney, for Figaro was busy and fairly efficient, while as far as tradition informs us, Sweeney remained passive. The League has authority, place, dignity, prestige—oh, everything—but never seems able, as the slang goes, to come across. Hence we shall wait, less hopefully than we could wish, but patiently, to see what it may accomplish in the new line of thaumaturgy now about to be laid

out for it. If it makes an effective international credit burgeon out of a group of nations that are all practically stony-broke, we will take note of the miracle with becoming reverence.

A FOUR-LINE special cable tucked away in the inmost depths of one of our dailies, reports from Budapest—and Budapest ought to know—that France has made a loan of 300 million francs to Hungary, repayable in fifteen years at five per cent. Hungary now is a sort of French province or protectorate, which ultimately, if the French have their way, will be united with Bavaria and Austria, probably under a monarchy. Meanwhile, the Franco-Hungarian agreement puts Hungary's entire military force at the disposal of France. All this is a convenient arrangement, but it costs money, and such investments are a long time coming back. France's outlay on the occupation of the Rhineland, up to the end of last March, came to something well over a billion and a half dollars; and up to the end of July, Germany had reimbursed her only about forty million. The French budget for 1921 will come to twenty-six billion francs, four billion more than last year; and in addition, France proposes to spend nearly as much again in a special budget of twenty-four billion francs for reparations and pensions, and charge it to Germany, under the provision of the Versailles Treaty! Perhaps that disposition of the account is as wise as any.

MEANWHILE France continues her policy of borrowing herself out of debt for such enterprises, and as long as she can find patient creditors, she will probably go on in that way. Conferences on international finance are being held, the principal one having just adjourned at Brussels; but the net result of their efforts does not seem to have gotten the world very far towards a solution of the problem. Indeed, in default of some unusually competent kind of magic or alchemy, it is hard to see any possible solution. The easy way with the thing is the one that our European friends all want; namely, that England should cancel France's debt to her, and that we should cancel England's debt to us, taking over corresponding claims on the German indemnity. This is simple enough; but what is the German indemnity as an asset in dollars and cents, or in cents? No one will tell; and in a transaction of that kind, it is an important fact to have established by pretty definite and reliable calculation. The fact is that neither the French nor the British Government dares, in good faith, name a sum. After all the extravagant expectations heretofore aroused, after all the gauds that M. Klotz has dangled before the eyes of the French people, how could the French Government now possibly disclose its actual estimate of that indemnity in the cold, white light that beats upon a business-asset? How could the British Government put a figure on it after the fantastic promises of Mr. Lloyd George's last campaign?

THE actual situation in European finance is not hard to understand. Every country is broke—bankrupt. Yet they carry on and can continue to carry on, in some fashion, as long as none of them calls for a show-down. A bank may be insolvent and known to be insolvent, but until some one starts a run on it, it can still carry on. France is in as precarious a position as any of the greater nations, to say the least, but until her indebtednesses are called, she can probably worry along. She makes no bones, however, of using what money she gets upon her schemes of militarism and imperialism—backing Poland, Hungary and every Russian adventurer who crops up with a scheme to beat the Bolsheviks, and any and every little clot of landlords and reactionaries that floats up to the top of the European stew; and the success she has so far attained does not enhance her as a going concern. We would, however, be in favour of letting France have anything she wants, provided she would tax herself as England, Germany, and all the other countries are doing. That is the only condition

we should make; and we should accompany it with the suggestion that she might logically begin with her myriad of petty landed proprietors.

ONE derives a certain satisfaction from the thought that Metternich was a devilishly clever and cunning person. Indeed, it would be a poor compliment to the race to think that humanity could be so put upon by a man who was not more than ordinarily ingenious. Perhaps the historians of the future will pay a like compliment to Messrs. Clemenceau, Millerand, Lloyd George, Wilson and the other shell-game experts of our day. But just now, while the light of the present falls with some clearness upon these figures, candour obliges us to confess that we have been tricked by men who would look like pretty small pumpkins alongside real masters of the game. Take, for instance, this Russian business—no new subject, to be sure. Does not the whole conduct of the affair remind one of the life-history of the village ne'er-do-well who makes one feeble business venture after another, without considering such matters as materials, market, interest and rent—and then goes to work for wages and sinks his savings in pouter-pigeons, rubber-plantations, oil-stock, ginseng, frog-farms, or cat-and-rat ranches?

WHAT does this whole Russian affair come to, after all, but a series of wild-cat speculations with other people's money and other people's lives? When the Standard Oil Company starts out to illuminate China, somebody does some deep thinking, and the brown brothers have the satisfaction of knowing that they are being exploited systematically and expertly. But when the Allies start out to save the world from bolshevism, they blunder along from one stupid makeshift to another. All this is so obvious that it must have passed through the mind of M. Chicherin when he saw Russia's replies to Messrs. Curzon and Colby lying side by side on his desk, waiting to be initialed. Chicherin knows that Curzon's pompous ultimatum was drawn for the sole purpose of saving England's face when she gives up and signs the final trade-agreement, as she is bound to do. And Chicherin knows, too, that America is beaten, and that she must eventually surrender. But the thought that he could easily sell a gold-brick to either Lord Curzon or Mr. Colby must have taken the edge off the Foreign Minister's satisfaction in the possession of all this knowledge.

It is announced that Japan intends to send a fresh batch of troops into Manchuria for the praiseworthy purpose of putting down bandits who are reported to be terrorizing the population. Without a diagram, it would be a little hard to see where Japan gets in on this; so the dispatches make it plain that she is doing it as a measure of public spirit to accommodate the Chinese residents of the affected districts. These Chinese find the native police and soldiers ineffective against the bandits, and have asked for Japanese soldiers. Some aspirant for a graduate degree ought to write a thesis on the international function of the bandit, or on the bandit as a factor in the spread of modern civilization. Bibles, rum, missionaries, bandits, opium—where would our "spheres of influence" be without them, and what would our influence in those spheres amount to? Among all these agencies, however, the bandit is about the only one that now remains in good working order; the others are not as serviceable as they used to be. The Japanese, keen observers as they are, have evidently discovered his immense usefulness and are once more to be congratulated on their discrimination in picking up the best that Western civilization has to offer in the way of diplomatic technique.

THE news that the only true internationalists are quite as truly international as ever, can surprise no one who took more than a sentimental interest in the origins of the late war. Nevertheless, the latest reports of the activities of the great commercial concerns whose

ententes Governments follow, not determine, will be of interest as giving some hint of the extent and ramifications of those activities, and indicating a possible alignment of Powers in the next war which the conflicting interests of these commercial gentlemen will bring about. A correspondent of the London *Observer* reports a giant merger of German, French and American steel-interests, having as its object "the exclusion of British industry from the reconstruction of Europe." The European representative of our own Steel Trust is said to be a company recently formed in Germany, and known as "Amstea"—a name oddly reminiscent of the labour-saving technique of modern advertising, in which two words are often ruthlessly tortured into one. There are hints that behind this merger is the power of Standard Oil; while the names of the National City Bank and the new German-American shipping corporation are mentioned prominently in connexion with it.

THERE has been no official repudiation of this story. To be sure, Mr. H. W. McAteer, president of "Amstea," has denied that his company is a subsidiary of the Steel Trust; but Mr. McAteer happens to be president of the American Steel Export Company, and anyone who knows anything at all about the American steel industry knows that if the Steel Export Company were not at least on speaking terms with the Steel Trust, it would not be getting much steel to export. Mr. McAteer's denial—and it is the only one, apparently, which has been made—really "lends an air of verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative." The recent timely visit of Judge Gary to France gives added spice to the *Observer's* story, and furnishes a further illustration of the ubiquitous internationalism of big business. Money is the Esperanto of the captains of finance, and it often has greater charm for them than has their native speech.

BUT there is a sinister significance in all this, when it is remembered that some months ago there were reports of a combination of all the great steel-interests of the British Empire, to be known as the British Empire Steel Corporation. This company was said to be second only, in size, to the American Steel Trust. The British group appears to have declined to join the international pool, and the new alliance is the answer to its refusal. It looks as if the future scramble for control of the world's industry would be between the British Empire Corporation on the one side and this new Franco-American-German entente on the other; and it is not difficult to see what the alignment of the respective governments will be. A pretty kettle of fish has been set stewing over the European flames, and it is reasonable to expect that a very peppery mess will come out of it in a few years—unless, of course, that beneficent body, the League of Nations, when it comes to talk disarmament, should dare to get away from the political and ostensible causes of war and concern itself with the economic and real causes.

If the Kaiser's Government, hoping to quiet troublesome critics, had ordered General Hindenburg to report on conditions in Belgium during the German occupation; and if the amiable General had reported that with the exception of certain irreconcilables who were usually shot or deported to hard labour in Germany, the Belgian population was content, and grateful to the German Command, most people, especially those living in the Allied countries, would have taken the report with a great deal of salt. Indeed, many people would have quoted it as another instance of the stupidity and mendacity of German militarists. Yet Mr. Daniels now asks the American public to accept the report of General Lejeune, Commandant-General of the Marine Corps, as convincing evidence that the occupation of Haiti by American marines has been a blessing to that country. The obvious inference is that the Secretary has no sense of humour. Anent the report, it need only be remarked that any patriot may be called a bandit and dealt with

as such, for purposes of convenience. The word bandit thus takes on a special and cabalistic meaning in our military glossary; but in the glossary of the Haitians it may come to have a very creditable connotation. On one interesting point General Lejeune is silent: what is the present status of the little difficulty between our official representatives in Haiti and those "bandits" (who happen, by an odd coincidence, also to be members of the Haitian Government) whose salaries our representatives are withholding until such time as they shall become more grateful to this Government for its ministrations?

MANY prominent Englishmen and English newspapers continue to deprecate the interest that is being expressed in this country in behalf of Ireland. This resentment is natural enough, no doubt, but its logic is in one respect shocking bad, for our English friends cite as a parallel to England's attitude, the attitude of Mr. Lincoln's Government towards the Southern Confederacy. This will hardly do. The South was not an alien and subject nation; Ireland is. Moreover, the question of State's rights and whether the United States is for all purposes a nation, was settled only *vi et armis* by the Civil War, and may quite conceivably recur. So, whether their complaint be just or unjust, our English brethren have not brought out a parallel case against us, by any means. The newly-formed committee of inquiry into British atrocities in Ireland, however, offers a chance that some Englishman with a sense of humour ought to perceive at once. Ever since we heard of it, we have hoped with all our heart that somebody would start a similar committee in England to investigate the conduct of the United States in Haiti, San Domingo and Central America. It would be a real "touch." We are all for Ireland, ourselves; but we are even more concerned with showing that any imperialist Government will act in the premises precisely like any other. An English committee, formed to offset ours, would by the very humour and fun of the thing, help most powerfully to bring this fact out. We would give all our old boots and shoes to see it done.

IN New York State in these days it is obviously very much better to be a broker or a lawyer than to be what Mr. Chadband in one of his expansive moments called "a soaring human boy," for if you are a broker and have a little pull with the powers that be, you may possibly have many choice opportunities to buy and sell bonds for the State and rake off a fine, fat commission for your trouble, or if you are a lawyer, you may get quite a nice little picking out of that appropriation of a couple of hundred thousand dollars which has just been voted for the New York City Police Department for "secret service," and nobody need ever know how much you have got away with or what you had to do to get the money, but if you are just a boy, you must every year on a certain fine day in October sign, seal and deliver yourself into the hands of the military authorities who will proceed to make your boyish mind well acquainted with all the delights of the manual of arms and all the intricacies of saluting and goose-stepping and the rest. But, of course, there is nothing to be very much surprised at in all this, for a system of society which comes to efflorescence in innumerable varieties of brokers and lawyers, necessarily calls for all the soldiers it can get.

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TOPICS OF THE DAY.

MUDDLING THROUGH.

MORAL indignation is quoted just now at a figure much below par; and yet a reading of the news from Riga will tempt almost anyone to indulge for a moment in this naïve and old-fashioned feeling. Reflection upon what is—and what might have been—must lead to the conclusion that if there ever was a futile, foolish and easily-preventable war, it was this last one between Russia and Poland. The Supreme Council's decision to open trade-negotiations with Russia was accepted by the world in general as a confession that the policy of force had failed. Upon the date of this confession, Polish troops occupied a line lying far to the east of the boundary fixed at Versailles, and within two weeks thereafter, the Polish Government was in receipt of Russian peace-proposals offering to throw all disputed points open to discussion, and making the best possible guarantee of good intention in the shape of a promise that, for the time being, the Red armies would make no attempt to break the Polish front. Warsaw's reply to these proposals was long delayed, and when it was finally made it took the form of an ultimatum more vicious and far more foolish than Austria's note to Serbia. The demands for the reorganization of the Russian Government, and for the establishment of a Polish protectorate over all territories west of the old frontier of 1772, were of course utterly impossible of acceptance, as the Polish Government well knew. As a matter of fact, these proposals amounted to a demand for a fight to the finish, in what the Allies had already confessed to be a lost cause.

With what help and encouragement she could get from France, England and America, Poland has fought her fight, and now at the end of it she is about to make peace. The preliminaries may by now have been signed, but so far the actual terms have not yet been announced. However, it has been stated that the conditions correspond pretty much to those presented at Riga on 24 July by M. Dombbski, the Polish Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs. In these comparatively mild terms, one sees scarcely a trace of the imperial demands of a half-year ago. Nor is this surprising; for at the end of this much-desired war, the Polish army occupies a line which lies considerably to the west of the positions held last winter, when the original Russian peace-proposals went forward. In the meantime the fatherland has been overrun, up to the gates of Warsaw; the country's losses in human life have been perhaps equal to those of Russia, man for man, and six or eight times as great in proportion to her population; and, according to the statement of M. Grabski at the Brussels Conference, three times as much money has been borrowed this year as last, and twenty-five times as much spent on war as on reconstruction.

During the course of this fight to a finish, Soviet officialdom followed the lead of our Mr. Wilson, and made every effort to play the masses of Poland against the Government. But unlike Mr. Wilson, the Bolsheviks will not shelve this policy on armistice-day, and impose a peace which would unify their enemies in perpetuity. On the contrary, the comparative reasonableness of the terms leads one to believe that Russia has given to Poland more than she had to give—not disingenuously, but with the object of proving good intent and showing what a futile affair this war was, after all. In other words, it is at least possible that Soviet Russia has not yet abandoned her

attempt to divide and conquer. Upon the success of this continued appeal to the people of a country driven to death by its rulers, the future of Central and Eastern Europe very largely depends. The fight, then, is over—but the finish is not yet.

The white flag that is flying on the western front of Russia is not the flag of the White Armies of reaction, as Baron Wrangel could perhaps see if he would turn his largest spy-glass in the direction of Riga. But the Baron is too busy to stop and look around; like the Poles, he is determined to fight to the finish, and just now he can hardly be expected to take any time off for thinking. It is probable that at this particular moment, troop-trains are moving from the Polish front down across Russia toward the Black Sea, while on the deck of a French battleship sailing eastward through the Mediterranean, General Weygand strides up and down, anxious to be at the job of saving civilization—which is just going down for the third time. Now General Weygand may be a very great man, but the chances are rather against his being able to hold the balance against the Bolsheviks in South Russia. It is true that General Petlura—Ukranian ally of everybody, and most recently of Poland—is said to be marching to join forces with Baron Wrangel. But it is not clear just how this juncture can be affected, since General Makhno is now reported to have transferred his allegiance to the Bolsheviks—by special request of his soldiers—thus carrying over to the Red armies the control of a region lying between the forces of General Petlura and General Wrangel. There seems to be no good reason why the Soviet generals, with the troops now at their command, should not be able to cut the South Russian army completely off from the Ukraine, and defeat the two forces separately and in short order. But whatever the strategy of the immediate situation may be, the large facts in the background admit of no possibility, other than an ultimate victory for the Soviets. What neither Kolchak, Yudenitch nor Denikin could do with supporting wars in progress on the Murmansk coast, along the Baltic and in the Ukraine, and with England and France pouring supplies into every port of Russia, Wrangel certainly can not do now, with Siberia sovietized, North Russia free of British and American troops, and the Baltic States one and all held inactive by peace or truce.

We doubt that there is such a thing as a casual observer, but if there is one somewhere, he probably believes that France would not be supporting Wrangel if he did not have a chance of coming out ahead; the French know a good deal about the situation in Eastern Europe—why not trust their judgment? This is a tempting line of argument, and by following it far enough one can prove that Petlura, Kolchak, Yudenitch, Denikin and Pilsudski are each and all now in Moscow, ruling in Lenin's stead. France has backed them all in turn, and it appears that even now she is grooming a new horse to send in, when Wrangel's race is run.

Is it the Little Entente that France would hitch next to the chariot of Mars? The task will not be an easy one, for up to the moment nothing approaching a general *entente cordiale* has yet been arrived at in the Central European orphanage of small nations. Such tendency to unification as is observable seems unfavourable to French interests, rather than otherwise. In Hungary, reaction still rules; and accordingly, it is with Hungary that France has had most intimate dealings of late. An attempt has even been made to bring Hungary and Rumania together in an

anti-Bolshevist alliance—a most natural arrangement, one would say, in view of all that happened in the course of the recent Rumanian invasion of the Magyar state. It was even reported that Hungary had promised to put 140,000 men in the field against Russia, and that Rumania had issued an ultimatum demanding the withdrawal of Soviet troops from her territory. It was likewise reported that France had asked Jugoslavia to send troops to the aid of Poland.

But in spite of all this activity on the part of the French Government, the new Entente in Central Europe does not draw its life from the Quai d'Orsay. In Jugo-Slavia and Bulgaria, the Agrarian Socialists are in control, while in Greece and Rumania this group is gaining in power. Austria has a Socialist Government, and according to President Masaryk, the latest elections in Czecho-Slovakia give a mandate in favour of nationalization. Already Czecho-Slovakia and Jugo-Slavia have entered into friendly engagements, with Rumania and Bulgaria hovering on the outskirts of the negotiation. The alliance may be mildly anti-Bolshevist, but it is tainted with socialism and it must necessarily be anti-Polish and above all anti-Magyar. Hence it would seem that the Little Entente has already passed beyond the control of France. And even with all the encouragement France can give, Hungary is hardly likely to enter the lists alone against Russia.

BLIND LEADERS OF THE BLIND.

La paix n'existera que quand il n'y aura plus ni exploités ni opprimés.—PROUDHON.

THE remedies prescribed by Mr. Maynard Keynes for a sick world are now pretty generally acknowledged to have been dictated by common sense. The removal of trade-barriers, the cessation of armed conflict, and agreement upon a definite and reasonable sum for German indemnity are still seen to be necessary preliminaries to the re-establishment of international credit and the resumption of production. But little seems to have been done along any of these lines since the real consequences of the Peace of Versailles were made known.

Sir George Paish, who predicted last May that western civilization would disintegrate under the strain of starvation and unemployment if Governments failed to turn quickly to peace and co-operation, is now placing a pathetic hope in the International Financial Conference at Brussels. An adequate international credit can be provided, he urges, only by balancing receipts and expenditures, by the removal of trade barriers, and by stopping the inflation caused by fresh issues of notes. These are the necessary steps to the effective restoration of peace, but there is no possibility of such a plan being put in operation until the amount of German reparation is fixed at a figure that will induce the German people to work. As disagreement on this point may confidently be expected to continue, however, and as there is slight hope of peace in any belligerent quarter, the chances seem to be that the present confusion will rule until at last the whole financial structure breaks under the strain.

The accuracy of this diagnosis and prognosis is confirmed from every side. What seems to be lacking among the war-ruined nations is the will to recover. Mr. Julius Meinl of Vienna has shown the folly of unnatural restrictions. The conflict between town and country, and between province and district, is an artificial condition imposed by the terms of the peace. "If any State in Central Europe," he says, "could abolish within its own bounds the system of compulsory government control, born of militarism

and war, it would also cause its fall in the other States. Government control would die of its own superfluity, its economic mockery." Closed frontiers spell death. The kind of war now being waged under the name of peace is conducted by armies of officials, and leaves the old, familiar destruction in its train.

"Austria can exist," says Mr. Meinl, "only if her agriculture, trade and commerce are properly conducted. These three branches of our economic life need perfect freedom within and without, for a large part of our commerce used to consist in our acting as intermediary between those different parts of the monarchy which to-day are called the Succession States." Compulsory government control has resulted in blockades at all the frontiers of the subdivisions of the old Empire, for closed frontiers are necessary if the prohibition of the export and import of goods, the regulation of cash transactions, and similar measures are to be enforced. "Compulsory government control, militarism and bolshevism have sprung from the same root, namely: the belief in force and compulsion, . . . and just as militarism led to the military catastrophe, so compulsory government control must inevitably lead to an economic one." The condition is not peculiar to Austria. Continuation of the present restrictive system will inevitably hasten the spread of famine and revolution.

The temper of the new States is plainly reflected in the attitude of Dr. Benes, the Czecho-Slovak Foreign Minister, who declares that Czecho-Slovakia fought not so much for political as for economic independence, and will not, therefore, consider the scheme for a confederation of the Danubian States, or even of a customs-union. The mind which mistakes isolation for independence is responsible for an appalling amount of human suffering. This persistence of protectionist fallacies is not the least of present calamities. It was a similar confusion of thought that led our own Senator Poindexter to give as a reason for opposing the League of Nations the fear that under Article 23 the members of the League would seek "to secure and maintain freedom of communication and transit . . . for the commerce of all members of the League," whereas our tariff policy is "utterly opposed in theory and in principle to the doctrine of federated States upon which basis the League of Nations is founded." It did not occur to him that our Federal Constitution, with its abolition of State tariffs, offered an exact and obvious precedent for binding the nations together in a union cemented by equality of rights.

A saner view has been expressed lately by the French deputy, André Paisant, in opposing discrimination against foreign workers in France. He was wise enough to see that laws preventing the movement of persons or of merchandise across international boundaries cut both ways. In noting the exchange of labourers between countries he said, "We have need of each other. We give and receive. France needs economic expansion. After so many lost years she ought to throw her intelligence and her products on the world's market. It would be folly to choose such an hour jealously to close her frontiers." Each nation has its characteristic talents and serves as a school for the others. Their diversity binds them together in a unity "which can do more," said M. Paisant, "for the peace of the world than all the armies combined," and humanity will find its equilibrium and harmony only when on wide-open frontiers men may pass freely over all roads, taking to each country and bringing back from it whatever may contribute to the well-being of the world.

The Italian Government responded to this larger spirit when it wisely agreed to open the port of Trieste to Austria, granting the same rights for Austrian and Italian goods, and providing facilities for storage and transportation, with the understanding that Austria would send as much as possible of her overseas trade through this port. The advantages that Austrians and Italians will both reap from this breach in the Chinese wall of unenlightened selfishness are an indication of the benefits which all the nations might enjoy if the whole soulless system of barriers were torn down.

Then again we have the recent warning of Mr. Walter Leaf, President of the Institute of Bankers in London, that restoration of stable conditions in Europe, and friendly relations with Germany and Austria are the supreme necessity, since production can be adequately stimulated only by improved methods of manufacture and greater facility of communication. Mr. Leaf believes that the limit of taxation has been very nearly reached, and that unless the expenditures demanded by an aggressive national policy are curtailed, "we may soon be face to face with a serious financial and economic disaster."

The facts reiterated by all competent students of world affairs, by financiers, economists and publicists, are clear and intelligible. They would perhaps be given due consideration if governments were not entangled by the private interests that thrive on the monopoly of natural resources for which they compete with national armies and navies. An unreconstructed diplomacy gives its attention to this struggle while the shadow of bankruptcy deepens. The blindness of national leaders and the general apathy of their followers give point to the reflection that "human stupidity is a measure of the infinite." The nations are like drowning men who pull each other under. Their safety depends upon a mutual release, but a blind instinct makes them tighten their grasp. Meanwhile the world more and more resembles that darkling plain

Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

AMERICA'S ASIATIC PROBLEM.

WHEN one comes to consider this vexed question of Oriental immigration, it is pretty safe to begin with the premise that the removal of restrictions would result in the flooding of the American market with cheap labour. Precisely what effect this would have in the long run upon the economic life of the country, it is difficult to say, but certainly one of the immediate effects would be a reduction in the wages and the standard of living of white labourers of the lowest grade, with whom the Mongolians would come immediately into contact. If the races remained thus permanently in competition, the whites most affected could hardly hope to achieve that minimum of leisure which seems necessary for any sort of cultural development. If, on the other hand, all the white inhabitants of America should succeed in realizing some leisure at the expense of a permanent class of helots, all pretence to democracy within the country would necessarily have to be abandoned.

As a matter of fact, this class-division has already been formed, in a fashion, wherever manufacturing and trading countries populated by white men are in a position to profit at the expense of the backward peoples in other quarters of the globe. From the moralist's point of view, it may make little difference whether class-lines follow geographic boundaries, or cut horizontally through the vari-coloured populations of the several countries. And yet, until we know

more about the results of racial inter-breeding, there is at least one good reason for keeping the races geographically isolated. Strains once mixed can never again be separated, and America has hardly done well enough with her mulattoes to be prepared to enter upon a new experiment in colour-blending, in advance of scientific knowledge as to what the outcome may be.

If we are then obliged to do violence to Oriental feelings by maintaining the exclusion policy, with all necessary precaution against leakage by way of the Mexican border, this is all the more reason why we should avoid giving injury, when we can; and the treatment of the Japanese in California is a case in point. The number of these settlers is so small that they do not form an important reserve of cheap labour, and in fact it is the complaint of the Native Sons that the Japanese will not keep their place as labourers, but insist upon buying land and setting up homes just like anybody else. Laws already in effect prohibit the purchase of land by Japanese aliens, and there is now before the people of California a measure which will make Japanese adults ineligible to administer as guardians any property belonging to American-born children of Japanese race.

As far as one can see, all this leads directly away from any satisfactory adjustment of affairs in California, at the same time that it gives new offence to the Government and the people of Japan. If the Japanese settlers make a practice of driving out the white residents and swallowing up whole towns and districts in the Golden State, perhaps this is partly because legal and social restrictions force them to herd together unnaturally. If it is feared that the frugal habits of the Orientals will cause a general depression of the standard of living, the situation might be remedied by giving the Japanese full liberty to increase their earnings, in order that their standard of living may be raised accordingly. If the menace of racial inter-mixture causes great concern, the Californians may discover through a study of the Negro problem that inter-breeding occurs almost entirely where standards of life are lowest, and very seldom involves Negroes of means and education. If it is treasonable disloyalty that our Western friends are most afraid of, we can think of no better remedy than education, naturalization, and the speediest possible absorption of the Japanese into the life of the country. The professional Americanizers have already said so much upon the advantage of this treatment of other aliens, that it should not be necessary for this paper to enlarge upon the subject.

We have just enough of a first-hand acquaintance with the Negro problem to know that these diffident suggestions—like any other suggestions whatever, touching upon any phase of any race question—will bring down the wrath of Heaven upon the head of him who utters them. But with all due respect to the more-than-religious fanaticism which any discussion of such a subject must arouse, one may venture the opinion that America's Asiatic problem is simple indeed, by comparison with Asia's American problem. With very little sacrifice on our own part, we can deprive the Orientals of most of their reasons for disliking and distrusting us. If we must keep the Golden Gate closed against Asiatic immigration, we can perhaps mend matters a little by helping China to close her borders against concessionaires, British, French and Russian, as well as Japanese. By way of proving that we are really disinterested, and innocent of any intention to step into the Oriental inheritance as the others step out, we could initiate a movement for the

destruction of the consortium, and at the same time we could suggest to China that she refrain for the time being from mortgaging her sovereignty for money to build a railway or two. If we really mean one-tenth of what we have said about preserving the integrity of Russian territory, we can once more invite Japan to remove her troops from Siberia. In California, we can begin the solution of the Japanese problem by annulling the laws which will serve only to perpetuate this problem. And then, having squared ourselves, more or less, with Asia, we can cut our navy's building programme in half—just for good measure.

These suggestions are made in a spirit of playfulness, with the full knowledge that the Government which has done so much to arouse Japan's fear of America will do nothing to allay this fear. Instead of helping China rid herself of concessionaires, we will get what we can out of the consortium-pool. Instead of Americanizing the Japanese in California, we will treat them as we have treated the Negroes in the South. Instead of helping Japan to find some safe outlet for her overflowing population, we will haggle with her over every attempt she makes at expansion. And all the while, new battleships will be building, and the Government will go calmly on in the faith that Japan will never attack a Power that floats two guns to her one. To do so would be suicide.

But there is one factor not yet admitted to these calculations, which may eventually prove to be of some importance. People who have lived in Japan tell us that when a man of that country is set upon by ill fortune from which there is no escape, he retires into his garden and kills himself. It was somewhat in this spirit that Japan attacked Russia, some fifteen years ago. To do so was suicide, it seemed. But Japan did it.

A JOB FOR A DESPOT.

WE have often had the idle fancy of a benevolent despotism which should compel its subjects to undergo a certain painful but highly salutary discipline which we can perhaps best describe by picturing ourselves in the position of the despot. If we had some extraordinary kind of emergency-power conferred upon us, like President Wilson's or Mr. Palmer's, we should employ it without stint or limit in compelling our citizens to encounter and cultivate their intellectual opposites. On pain of death, no one could associate for more than a very low percentage of his time, with those who were like-minded with him, or read any literature that reflected his own opinions; and on the other hand, each one would be required to read a specified kind and amount of opposition-literature and to herd almost exclusively with persons standing at the opposite pole of opinion. Socialists and liberals would have to read radical books and papers; radicals would have to read the literature of liberalism and toryism; tories would be put upon their primary terms and definitions: and all hands would have to seek the staple of their social acquaintance in the opposing camps. We have not worked out the details of procedure whereby this should be done, but the success of the Department of Justice, the New York State Assembly and similar despotic institutions, has convinced us that human nature is not as obdurate against force as we thought it was; and hence we have no doubt that the thing would be quite practicable.

What an intolerable deal of distortion would be corrected if the socialist had to sit up diligently o'

nights with the capitalist, and forsaking all others, cleave only unto him so long as they both should misunderstand one another. The capitalist might get—he could not help getting—a great deal of digestible information, which he does not now possess, about the economics of his own function. The socialist might in time, for his part, learn what capital is, and its function, and enlarge his ideas about the legitimacy of both. Suppose the radical, especially the radical of a theoretical and literary turn—like ourselves, for example—should close-herd for a term with the thoughtful and pragmatic man of business; how much of fundamental social theory the business man would learn, and how the radical, "impatient for the larger scope," would gain respect for the practical difficulties that beset his programme, and make progress in wisdom and patience.

These sets of opposites, thus brought together by force and obliged to rub elbows, would not only gain in understanding but in encouragement. As it is now, the tory has not the faintest idea how the world is going; neither has the radical or the socialist. Left to himself, the tory foregathers with his tory friends, reads a tory press, and imagines that all creation is going to the dogs. The radical, being free to choose, talks with radicals and reads fundamental economics, measures and estimates current social experiments in the high light of his theory, and decides that precious little is being done, and almost nothing done right and that all creation is going to the dogs. The Union League Club and the garret in Grub Street—or, as the newspapers say, the lair of the Red—are equally depressing places. But let the radical and the tory take one another to heart, sympathetically hear one another's troubles, and each discovers that things are going ever so much more his way than he thought they were, and he is correspondingly heartened and stimulated; and really the resultant view of the world is in each case more nearly correct. The radical never knows how different the world is until he has painstakingly measured up its progress by the ancient landmarks of the tory; the tory can never know how much is left unchanged and inviolate until he hears the catalogue of iconoclasm, as shocking as Leporello's, rehearsed to him by the radical.

But the best practical result accruing from this policy of a benevolent despotism, is that men in all the conflicting camps would soon perceive, through the enforced exercise of their primary human qualities, the absurdity and childishness of remaining divided against one another by opinion. As Matthew Arnold so truly said of nations and peoples, what really unites and separates individual persons is not opinion, but *Geist*; not belief or creed, but the manner of spirit they are of. Depending upon opinion, and essentially uninformed opinion, what extraordinary, what utterly comical caricatures does the *Ungeist* in all of us make of whole, huge categories of our fellow-beings! We have contemplated the horrific picture which certain capitalists, in their expansive moments, have drawn for us of the typical socialist, and it was all we could do to keep a straight face. We have also heard some superheated socialist oratory about the typical capitalist, which would have made the everlasting fortune of the cartoonist who could reproduce it. This is all well enough for us, because we happen to know enough socialists and capitalists, and enough about the social philosophy of both, to be aware that not in personal character or in philosophy, is either of them in the least like the image set up by sheer opinion in the other's mind. But then we at once think of

our own mental picture of the liberal, who seems to us the poorest sort of fish alive; or of the officeholder, who seems to us utterly horrible, almost troglodytic; and we wonder how much that picture would be modified if we really knew some officeholders and were on intimate terms with more than one or two liberals! If we were snowbound through a winter on the country-side with Mr. Palmer or Mr. Newton Baker, or found ourselves fellow-castaways among friendly savages with half a dozen of America's best assorted liberals, what might be the triumphs of *Geist* over inexperienced opinion? We can not know; but the unanswerable question has its fascinations. Opinion is paramount in its sphere, but it should have little to do with determining human relations; whereas now, in default of some such arrangement as we propose for a benevolent despotism to effect, it unfortunately has a great deal to do with it. Jeremy Taylor simply lighted up with religion the sanctions of plain good sense, when he said, "It is keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and not identity of opinion, which the Holy Spirit demands of us."

There is nothing now but oblivion before the present Administration in Washington; and it still has its war-powers. Why might it not distinguish itself by a crowning act of tyranny that could be somehow conceived of as well meant, and that, indeed, with luck, might really turn out for the public welfare. The Department of Justice has the machinery for taking care that everybody, radicals, liberals, socialists, Tories, all keep the proper kind of company. Mr. Palmer's henchmen have had a great deal of practice in that line already, and the war debauched so many private citizens into a love for spying and snooping that they could count on having plenty of help from these charmed and enthusiastic amateurs. Mr. Burleson would be the very man to see that we all read the right sort of literature, that none of the "capitalist dailies" ever reached a capitalist, that Mr. Morris Hillquit was never fed on weaker meat than that of the "trade-organs of Wall Street," and that Mr. Oswald Garrison Villard, Mr. George Foster Peabody and Mr. Charles W. Eliot should never by any chance venture upon a fragment of liberal literature. (We use all these names as they occur to us, without prejudice, and purely as typical and representative.) Here is the opportunity for an Administration which already has despotic power and is already uncommonly well versed in its exercise, to do something with it that has at least a remote chance of turning out profitably to the people of this country.

THE CONFESSIONS OF A BOMB THROWER.

My name is Bridget McClowski and last Thursday when I was through with my morning housework I decided to go out and throw some bombs. It was such a fine, bright, sunshiny morning that I felt restless and wanted something active to do. 'Tis true I had been pretty busy getting my six children off to school and cooking and ironing and cleaning up, but then I come of active blood and it takes a good deal of hard work to tire me. I don't know whether I get this restless feeling from my mother who was Irish or from my father who was Russian. At any rate, they were both very temperamental. In fact, all through my childhood missiles of one kind or another were always flying about in the home circle; and now that I am grown up I am not really satisfied unless something is doing in that line occasionally.

I had made out a list of groceries along with the bombs as I thought I might as well kill two birds with one stone, and I was not sure whether one buys bombs at the grocery or at the hardware store. Then, too, I thought perhaps I had better get the bombs first of all, as in these days of high prices you can never tell how long your money will hold out. Leon, my husband, earns only twenty-five dollars and eighty cents a week and to feed and clothe the eight of us, with

sugar at twenty-five cents a pound, I have to plan right close. My list read: Three bombs, medium size; a quarter of a pound of butter, third grade; three potatoes, second-hand; one head of cabbage and a string of garlic. I had intended to buy a quarter of a pound of meat, too, but I decided to give that up since I was getting the bombs.

I was disappointed at the delicatessen store for the man insisted that they never sold bombs there. At first he thought I meant buns, but when he finally understood he seemed to be sorry and said that though he had none in stock he would try to get some for me if I could wait, as he always made a point of trying to please his customers. I thanked him but said I must get them to-day as to-morrow was wash-day. As I turned to go away he left the next customer and followed me out onto the street and whispered that he wished me luck and hoped that I was going to use them on the landlord—we have the same one—as he had heard that we were all to be raised ten dollars next month. We pay forty dollars now for two rooms.

At the hardware store, too, they had no bombs, but the man said he thought I could get them either in a second-hand furniture store or in a pawnshop. He said that sometimes people who had got their bombs all ready to throw had to pawn them at the last minute until such time as they could get money enough together to buy a clock to set them off with. For somehow a bomb always needs a clock to go with it. The man at the hardware store was very friendly and pleasant and said how he had read in a Sunday paper that a real thriving business was now being done in second-hand clocks and bombs.

So I went off to a near-by pawnshop, and sure enough, there I got three good, medium-sized bombs at a very reasonable price. The pawnbroker said they were a real bargain in view of the fact that so many new wars were coming on after the peace conference, which would be sure to send up the price of bombs as well as everything else, but he said that he could let me have these three cheap because the Socialists who had brought them in had become Social-Democrats and had turned very respectable. After dickering with the pawnbroker a little on the ground that after all they were second-hand bombs and should therefore come cheaper, I took the things and paid for them and still had a bit of money left in my purse for the groceries.

I hurried home and put the lunch on the table and left a note telling the children not to wait as I didn't know when I would get back. I carried my bombs in my market-basket down to the business-section of the city. Soon I came to a busy part where the folks were all coming out for lunch. I thought this would be a good place to throw one of my bombs but I didn't know just how to go about it. So I went over to the policeman at the crossing. "I'm a poor woman," says I to him, "and I'm sure, with the kind face of ye, ye'll be a fatter helpin' me."

"Sure!" says he.

"Well, then, tell me," says I, "what will be the best way to throw these here bombs I have in me basket—where they will do the most good."

"And it's bombs ye would be throwin'," says he, scratchin' his head. "Well, now, it all depends on the kind ye want to throw. When Chief Palmer, God save him! is in charge of any bomb-throwin' he always leaves plenty of bits of red paper near the scene."

Just at that moment a wagon, with a red flag hanging behind and a man smoking a pipe and driving, comes along and the policeman says admiringly: "Now, there's the load of dynamite that would create the real havoc besides the which your poor little bombs would look like a cock-fight alongside the great war!"

And then it seemed to me that another wagon came along and hit the one with the red flag and the man drops the pipe out of his mouth. . . . And here I am in the hospital, not knowin' how my children are or rightly what happened that day. . . .

And now I've been reading a lot in the papers about how all the anarchists and Reds tried to blow the town up, but that isn't so. It was either those two wagons or me that should have the credit. One paper says how a Russian school-teacher had been seen on the street the week before it happened and he must be to blame, and another paper said as how another man had been there who had said to a friend that he was for everybody having houses to live in, so very likely it was he who did it; then the editors said that Mr. Palmer had gotten hold of a Russian who had studied mathematics and would therefore know all about setting the clock; and then in some of the papers things began to look black

for another foreigner who was an Italian and had a beard into the bargain, and there was a deal of talk besides about a pacifist having done it because he was against the use of violence and had wanted to stop the war.

When I get well and all my washing done, I shall go and tell those editors all about it, and how it was all due to the wagon with the red flag, and the man with the pipe, and me with my bombs. And I shall tell them, too, about the fine gentleman I heard speaking softly to the policeman as they were putting us into the ambulance after the big bang. "Did ye see that pipe," he said, "and if ye did 'twill be a fine thing for ye if ye didn't."

"Sure," I heard the policeman say, "and why should I be bothering about the miserable old corn pipe that it was?"

STELLA CROSSLEY TALJORD.

"OH! SAY, CAN YOU SEE?"

My decision to vote for Senator Harding is based on an experience. I forget the month, but it was at a meeting of the American Defence Society in New York about a year or so ago that I fell for Mr. Harding. He was the guest of honour at one of those exhilarating Carnegie Hall entertainments which the American Defence Society, by way of insuring its patrons against interruption, used to open with a band concert rendered by beefy coppers in mufti.

Mr. Harding spoke for about three quarters of an hour. He was a fine figure of a man as he strode up and down the platform, above the average size and weight, with tremendously beetling brows, a great, big, solemn face and a look of more than human gravity. In fact, there was something almost sacrilegious in the suggestion conveyed by Mr. Harding's personality.

The American Defence Society is generally apprehensive about something or other. At this particular time it was being apprehensive about labour. Labour, it seems, was not behaving very well. It was neither working hard enough nor long enough to suit the Defence Society's clientele. Moreover, discontent, hardly distinguishable from sedition, had broken out in labour's ranks. Wherefore a meeting had been called to deal with the situation; and no better man than the Senator from Ohio could have been chosen as principal speaker.

Every Senator must do a little preliminary wandering about before getting down to the point. That is his way; just as it is a mule's way to turn around and snort a couple of times before lying down to roll. So, in deference to custom, Senator Harding praised the little, red schoolhouse here, apostrophized the Founding Fathers and the empyrean there, noted the fact that westward the star of empire takes its course over yonder, and, returning to the water pitcher, snorted somewhat loudly at the red flag. Then he got to work.

In an address carefully prepared and rich in illustration, he proceeded in measured, rolling syllables to attack labour's discontent. He not only attacked it, but demolished its economic and moral foundations. He showed that labour was not merely unpatriotic but disloyal, not merely disloyal but its discontent was unwarranted by existing conditions. While frankly admitting that society is not yet wholly perfect, Mr. Harding asserted that labour had no conceivable ground for discontent, inasmuch as every single child born within the boundaries of our country has, as his birthright, complete and absolute equality of opportunity with every other child so born. In other words, if a man does not get what he wants in America and make a success of life, it is distinctly that man's own fault. How else could it be in a land whose institutions are the handiwork of the Founding Fathers?

This was a pretty good beginning, but Mr. Harding went considerably further. He rang the changes on his subject and told us that there exists in America neither undeserved poverty nor undeserved wealth; that every one of us fares exactly as he merits, irrespective of birth, heredity and environment.

And by the great horn spoon, this astounding lawyer-like old person, having stated his thesis, coolly started in to prove it out of the wealth of his own experience. I say old person, because, in spite of his strong figure and large, booming voice, Mr. Harding gave the impression of great age. So much so, that if Æsop had stepped from the wings and greeted Mr. Harding as his contemporary, one would not have been surprised in the least. Besides, there was a curious and almost pathetic simplicity about his utterances, such as only emanates from the very old, the very young and sometimes from the blind. As I watched him, I found myself thinking of the old sea chief in the Song of Roland, who appears before the battle of Roncesvalles to give counsel to the peers and barons of France; and the chronicler introduces him as "The old Amiral, the ancient Amiral who had outlived Virgil and Homer."

With force, eloquence and an emotion which seemed quite authentic, Mr. Harding drove straight at his mark, like a clipper ship with all sails set running its easting down. It is wonderful how elderly politicians can crack on sail and make the spray fly when they get going. No tomfool theories, statistics or sociology for him. He had a point to prove and he proposed to prove it in his own way. And there and then he performed a rather marvellous feat. For, in a burst of sonorous bellowing, he literally picked up his somewhat flabbergasted hearers and slapped them down at the headwaters of all wisdom, his beloved home town. There in Corsica, Ohio (I think that was the place—Corsica!) as host and master of ceremonies, he introduced to us one by one, by their given names, a long list of boys, the companions of his youth; and of each of these wretched wights he reviewed the life history, much in the manner of Edgar Lee Masters in his Spoon River sketches.

Their names, of course, I can not remember, much less their avocations and the catalogue of their changing fortunes. Suffice it to say, that every boy that was born high up went down and every boy that began low went up, with the mechanical accuracy of the opposed pistons of a steam engine. The rich men's sons who lived in costly mansions on Catherine Street, if it was Catherine Street, lost their money and sank down and down, finally becoming poor, miserable day-labourers and drunkards. The poor washerwoman's boy, the blacksmith's lad, the bricklayer's child, mounted up and up in the world, at last attaining vertiginous heights that would bewilder a steeplejack's brain. Some of these industrious paragons even became vice-presidents of trust companies, railways, banks and other splendid institutions. And finally, when Bill, Tom, Gus and little Joe had been disposed of, the speaker, in just pride and yet with becoming modesty and a certain note of gay and tender humour, displayed his own youth, his once lowly estate, and his rise, through the inestimable privileges of poverty, even to the portals of the United States Senate.

Was there ever a more comforting social philosophy, and could it have come at a more timely moment—or from any one but a United States Senator? No injustice in his world, no privilege, and equal opportunity for everybody! The law, the bench, the countinghouse, corporate industry, property, the State itself,

well booted and gowned, sat forward in its seat, and purred, expanded and applauded.

This was the climax of Mr. Harding's effort, after which there was little doing. Pleased with success, he rested on his laurels and descended once more to the commonplace. But the wind-up of his oration was like the concluding measures of a great narrative symphony, summing up, in reminiscent chords and phrases the themes of its larger melodies—the little red schoolhouse, the Founding Fathers, the empyrean and the star of empire. Surely America could not and would not fail! The audience relaxed and sank back like sleepers who had been roused by a passing storm, while the speech itself gradually rumbled off into the distance, with its monotone only now and then broken by dull explosions of inanity.

That is the Mr. Harding of the past, a magnificent by-product of party politics, a person whose naïve and voluble ignorance makes him, perhaps, the most entertaining object in public life. What would Mr. Harding have said if confronted with the facts of the America he inhabits but has not seen? It is hard to guess, but no doubt he would have been equal to the occasion. Most successful politicians develop a fairly useful technique of escape from confrontations with reality; and we may be sure that in this respect Mr. Harding is as well equipped as any.

But, of course, the Mr. Harding of Carnegie Hall and yesteryear is not the Mr. Harding of to-day, the Mr. Harding for whom I shall cast my vote. Far from it. The present Mr. Harding is quite another person. The present Mr. Harding has been transformed by exposure to progressive education. No longer is he a reactionary nor even a Simon-pure Republican. The chosen one of Republican Mr. Penrose has had Progressive Mr. Judson Welliver for his chief tutor. Also, our excellent Democratic editor, Colonel and luckless kingmaker is said to have made a midnight journey to Marion, where, it is whispered, he seduced the complacent genius of Mr. Harding, and begot upon it a great liberal document which, with characteristic modesty, he published in his weekly paper under the title of "Mr. Harding's Great Speech." Mr. Harding no longer dashes to the defence of Bethlehem Steel; also he is now a suffragist of the first order. He has become humble and open-minded, too, and swallows with fortitude every bolus of social justice and feminism that his trainers bring. In short, Mr. Harding is a liberal and should receive the liberal vote.

But the above is not the impelling reason for my support of Mr. Harding. The decision to support him is based on strategy as well as personal appreciation. For undoubtedly Mr. Harding will win, whether the liberals flock to him or not. He does not need our support in order that he may become our president. But, with the liberal cohorts massed under the Republican eagles—stirring sight—a great historic result might be won, to wit, the annihilation of the Democratic party during the next few years. Imagine what might happen if Harding should carry every Northern State and a few Southern ones to boot. It would be a crushing blow and the Democratic party, doomed to four or eight lean years, without a crumb of patronage, might well languish and die, leaving the field clear for a new political organization.

Of course, I do not mean to imply that, if we could destroy the Republican instead of the Democratic party, a lesser service to society would be rendered. On the contrary, the taking off of the Republican party would rank second only to the demise of both.

Nor do I ease myself with the illusion that it is preferable to put in the White House a Harding rather than a Cox—a man who can not see rather than one who will not. My point is that the Democratic party seems to lend itself to merciful destruction by the ballot. Moreover, the prospect is bright all around. For we have yet to learn what four years of Mr. Harding will do for the G. O. P.

AMOS PINCHOT.

SHELLEY'S NEW PAMPHLET.

I KNOW plenty of young men and women who try to write poetry as spiders spin their webs—out of their own insides. They allow no external business or public affair to intrude upon the tranquillity of their souls. Many of them have told me, with looks of icy disdain, that they never touch a newspaper, and their sense of superiority in saying this is increased by their knowledge that I have written much in newspapers. They eschew the vulgarity of the garish world, and hide their hearts in a nest of roses. One can only wish that they would keep them there. But they wallow in their own emotions with such perfervid ecstasy that they can not imagine a world so heartless as to take but a passing interest in their psychological concerns. The strangest thing about these fastidious eremites is that they always suppose themselves to be growing more and more like Shelley every shining hour.

Like Shelley! Like the man who was possessed almost to madness by twin passions—love of mankind and indignation at wrong! Shelley was one of those who live in the great outer world, and whose inner life is fed on it. He was one of those who have most decisively followed Goethe's counsel—"To grip and grapple with the hard realities of existence." From the very first Shelley did it. When he was little more than a boy, he went to Ireland (then as always the crying shame of his nation) and sought to mitigate that immemorial wrong by distributing his pamphlet upon Ireland about the streets of Dublin. There was nothing peculiar about such an attempt. Many a generous-hearted Englishman has tried by similar means to display his indignant sympathy with a people so shamelessly misused, and has struggled equally in vain against the blind hosts of his country's stupidity and greed. But his action shows at least that Shelley never kept his eyes fixed, like a monk of Athos, upon his own navel, or, like our dainty versifiers, upon his own heart. As "The Hermit of Marlow" he poured out his "Proposal for Putting Reform to the Vote." That was in 1817, about fifteen years before the first Reform Bill, while the vote was still regarded as the readiest solution of man's woes; and in the same year he wrote the "Address on the Death of the Princess Charlotte"—an equally stirring appeal to the common English people. Two years later came the Manchester massacre which we know as "Peterloo," and which was the incitement to Shelley in composing his "Mask of Anarchy," containing the significant verse:

And many more Destructions played
In this ghastly masquerade,
All disguised, even to the eyes,
Like Bishops, lawyers, peers or spies.

It has long been known that just about the same time (1820) Shelley was contemplating another political pamphlet in prose, but most students of his works supposed it had never been written. A largish note-book, however, has been preserved, written by Shelley's own hand, and containing an unfinished sketch of the proposed treatise to be called "A Philo-

sophical View of Reform." Many words are omitted, there are many gaps, and some incomplete sentences, besides passages written in. But Mr. T. W. Rolleston, into whose hands the volume had come, has now deciphered and published it (through Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press) as a printed volume of ninety-two pages, and all lovers of Shelley will read it with that peculiarly intense interest and fascination which the poet always inspires. The volume contains as frontispiece a photograph of a pencil-drawing made by Shelley himself upon the cover. It represents an oak tree standing among rocks, with a distant prospect of a lake or plain and mountains beyond. I have no clue to his reason for drawing this particular scene. It has no relation to the text. Perhaps it was a view that caught his attention somewhere near Pisa, where he was chiefly living at that time.

Shelley had then just published the "Cenci" and the "Prometheus Unbound," and had lately written some of his loveliest lyrics now known through the world. We may well regret that it is not a drama or even a scrap of lyric that has been discovered afresh. But Shelley's prose was always fine, at all events after he had escaped from the temptations of youthful rhetoric, and here we have a large quantity of it almost at its best. Matthew Arnold said he believed the prose would survive the verse. It was a crazy criticism, but it showed how highly the critic thought of the prose. Here it is beautiful in clearness, arrangement, and the exact use of words—the three necessities of prose style, in so far as style can be separated from the substance or way of looking at things—and the contamination of rhetoric is seldom felt. In fact, the pamphlet is singularly sober in expression and moderate in outlook.

The very thought of priests and kings always put Shelley in a rage. He had inherited the rage from his guide and philosopher, Godwin, whose "Political Justice" had been his textbook from boyhood. But in this pamphlet the full phial of his wrath is reserved only for old Malthus and his Law of Population, which regarded the whole human race as one large mouth growing larger too rapidly as compared with the food that it was perpetually gaping to swallow. Simply as an example of treatment, let me take a passage in which, after touching upon the various great countries of the world, the poet introduces the United States, at that time still so young in history:

The system of government in the United States of America, [he writes] was the first practical illustration of the new philosophy. Sufficiently remote, it will be confessed, from the accuracy of ideal excellence is that representative system which will soon cover the extent of that vast continent. But it is scarcely less remote from the insolent and contaminating tyrannies under which, with some limitation of the terms as regards England, Europe groaned at the period of the successful rebellion of America. America has no king; that is, it has no officer to whom wealth and from whom corruption flow. It has no hereditary oligarchy; that is, it acknowledges no order of men privileged to cheat and insult the rest of the members of the State, and who inherit the right of legislating and judging which the principles of human nature compel them to exercise to their own profit and to the detriment of those not included within their peculiar class. It has no established Church; that is, no system of opinions respecting the abstrusest questions which can be the topics of human thought, founded in an age of error and fanaticism, and opposed by law to all other opinions, defended by prosecutions, and sanctioned by enormous grants given to idle priests and forced from the unwilling hands of those who have an interest in the cultivation and improvement of the soil.

I am not sure whether Americans would now agree with Shelley's final word of praise for their Constitution, which, he says, "is honourably distin-

guished from all other governments that ever existed" because "it acknowledges the progress of human improvement, having a law by which the Constitution is reserved for revision every ten years." If such a law still exists, it seems seldom put to actual use. But the whole passage exactly illustrates Shelley's conception of reform. Sweep away monarchy, aristocracy, and the church, he would say, and then a great advance towards human improvement and happiness has been made. He would certainly have established universal suffrage upon the ruins of antiquity, though he was inclined to think the time hardly ripe for woman suffrage, in spite of Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft, Godwin's wife for one happy year, and the mother of Mary Shelley. But it is worth noting that his faith in the vote and Parliament was not very robust; and perhaps he supported the demand for that kind of reform chiefly because it was the demand of the extremists of that day, and was particularly annoying to the rich and the noble.

At least equally annoying must have been his detestation, as an ardent pacifist, of soldiers and war. His expressions upon this subject would certainly have landed him in gaol during the late war, whether in England or America. Of soldiers he writes in this newly-discovered pamphlet:

From the moment that a man is a soldier he becomes a slave. He is taught obedience; his will is no longer, which is the most sacred prerogative of men, guided by his own judgment. He is taught to despise human life and human suffering; this is the universal distinction of slaves. He is more degraded than a murderer; he is like the bloody knife which has stabbed and feels not; a murderer we may abhor and despise; a soldier is, by profession, beyond abhorrence and below contempt.

And again, speaking of Peterloo, he says in words that were partly repeated in the "Mask of Anarchy":

If circumstances had collected a considerable number as at Manchester on the memorable 16th of August, if the tyrants command the troops to fire upon them or cut them down unless they disperse, he (the true patriot) will exhort them peaceably to defy the danger, and to expect without resistance the onset of the cavalry, and wait with folded arms the event of the fire of the artillery and receive with unshrinking bosoms the bayonets of the charging battalions.

It is excellent advice, but I have always found that when a crowd, no matter how enthusiastic in spirit, is faced by charging cavalry or battalions, the flesh of the crowd becomes lamentably weak.

Shelley was writing in times very much like our own. A long and terrible war had been waged and won. People looked in vain for the prosperity that had been promised with peace. The country was almost bankrupt; paper money was poured out; the national debt had reached a huge amount; the cost of living was constantly mounting up; there was much distress, much smouldering unrest, bursting here and there into open flame. The Government was freely employing spies as provocative agents, "under-cover informants," or "stool-pigeons." The gods of evil and darkness had encroached far upon the realms of virtue and light, as Shelley might have said; for, as though he had been an ancient Manichæan, he regarded the world as a battle-ground between the Powers of Light and Darkness.

We can now see that his suggested reforms were far too simple to cure all human woes. We know now that however clean our sweep of kings and priests and officials and even of the State itself, the Islands of the Blessed would not necessarily be reached. We know that it is in the heart of mankind itself that the evil darkness lies brooding, and only by the diffusion of internal light can the horror of

that darkness be dispersed. But as we read this pamphlet, just a century old, and written by the very sweetest of all our lyric poets, we feel that we are conversing with a noble spirit, kindred with all noble spirits, and we know that it was from his wide humanity and close grip upon the harsh realities of surrounding life that even the sweetness of his lyrics was derived, and that thus alone they rose above sweetness into grandeur.

HENRY W. NEVINSON.

A NOVELIST OF DISINTEGRATION.

I

MUCH as G.B.S. refuses to be called an Englishman, Pío Baroja refuses to be called a Spaniard. He is a Basque. Reluctantly he admits having been born in San Sebastian, an outpost of Cosmopolis on the mountainous coast of Guipuzcoa, where a stern-featured race of mountaineers and fishermen, whose prominent noses, high, ruddy cheek-bones and square jowls are gradually becoming known to the world through the paintings of the Zubiaurre, clings to its ancient un-Aryan language and its ancient songs and customs with the hard-headedness of hill-people the world over.

From the first Spanish discoveries in America till the time of our own New England clipper ships, the Basque coast was the backbone of Spanish trade. The three provinces were the only ones that kept their privileges and their municipal liberties all through the process of the centralizing of the Spanish monarchy with cross and faggot, which historians call the great period of Spain. The rocky inlets in the mountains were full of shipyards that turned out privateers and merchantmen manned by lanky, broad-shouldered men with hard, red-beaked faces and huge hands coarsened by generations of straining at heavy oars and halyards; men who feared God and the sea-spirits of their strange mythology, and were a law unto themselves, adventurers and bigots. It was only in the nineteenth century that the Carlist wars and the passing of sailing ships broke the prosperous independence of the Basque provinces and threw them once for all into the main current of Spanish life. Now paper-mills take the place of shipyards, and instead of the great fleet that went off every year to fish the Newfoundland and Iceland banks, a few steam trawlers harry the sardines in the Bay of Biscay. The war, however, has done much to make Bilbao one of the industrial centres of Spain, even restoring in some measure the ancient prosperity of its shipping.

Pío Baroja spent his childhood on this rainy coast between green mountains and green sea. There were old aunts who filled his ears with ancient legends of former mercantile glory, with talk of sea-captains and slavers and shipwrecks. Born in the late 'seventies, Baroja left the mist-filled inlets of Guipuzcoa to study medicine in Madrid, a febrile capital set on the dry upland plateau of New Castile, full of the artificial scurry of government, full of beggars and politicians. He even practised, reluctantly enough, in a town near Valencia, where he must have acquired his distaste for the Mediterranean and the Latin genius; and later was municipal doctor in his own province at Cestona, where he boarded with the woman who baked the sacramental wafers for the parish church, and, so he claims, felt the spirit of racial solidarity glow within him for the first time. But he was too timid in the face of pain and too sceptical of science as of everything else ever to acquire the cocksure brutality of a country doctor. He gave up medicine and returned to Madrid, where he became a baker. In "Juventud—

Egolatria" (Youth—Self-worship), a recent book of delightfully shameless self-revelation, he says that he ran a bakery for six years before starting to write. And he still runs the bakery.

You can see it any day, walking towards the Royal Theatre from the great focus of Madrid life, the Puerta del Sol. It has a most enticing window. On one side are hams and red sausages and purple sausages and white sausages, some plump to the bursting, like Rubens's Graces, others as wizened and smoked as saints by Ribera. In the middle are oblong plates with *patés* and sliced bologna and things in jelly; then come ranks of cakes, cream-cakes and fruit-cakes, from obscene jam-rolls to celestial cornucopias of white cream. Through the door you see a counter with round loaves of bread on it, and a basket full of brown rolls. If some one comes out, a dense sweet smell of fresh bread and pastry swirls about the sidewalk.

So, by meeting commerce squarely in its own field, Baroja has freed himself from any compromise with Mammon. While his bread remains sweet, his novels may be as bitter as he likes.

II

BAROJA'S world is dismal, ironic, the streets of towns where industrial life sits heavy on the neck of a race as little adapted to it as any in Europe. No one has ever described better than Baroja the shaggy badlands and cabbage-patches round the edges of a city, where the débris of civilization piles up ramshackle suburbs in which starve and scheme all manner of human detritus. Back-lots where men and women live fantastically in shelters patched out of rotten boards, of old tin cans and bits of chairs and tables that have stood for years in bright, pleasant rooms. Grass patches behind crumbling walls where on sunny days starving children spread their fleshless limbs and run about in the sun. Miserable wine-shops where the winds whine through broken panes to chill men with ever-empty stomachs who sit about gambling and find furious drunkenness in a sip of *aguardiente*. Courtyards of barracks where painters who have not a cent in the world mix with beggars and guttersnipes to cajole a little hot food out of soft-hearted soldiers at mess-time. Convent doors where ragged lines shiver for hours in the shrill wind that blows across the bare Castilian plain waiting for the nuns to throw out bread for them to fight over like dogs. And through it all moves the great crowd of the outcast, sneak thieves, burglars, beggars of every description, rich beggars with a flourishing clientele and poor devils who have given up the struggle to exist, homeless children, prostitutes, people who live a half-honest existence selling knick-knacks, penniless students, inventors who while they are dying of starvation pass away the time telling everybody of the riches they might have had; all who have failed on the daily treadmill of bread-making, or who have never had a chance to enjoy even the doubtful privilege of industrial slavery. Outside of Russia there has never been a novelist so taken up with all that society and respectability reject.

Not that the interest in outcasts is anything new in Spanish literature. Spain is the home of that type of novel which the pigeonhole-makers have named picaresque. These loafers and wanderers of Baroja's, like his artists and grotesque dreamers and fanatics, all are the descendants of the people in the "Quijote" and the "Novelas Ejemplares," of the rogues and bandits of the "Lazarillo de Tormes," who with Gil Blas invaded France and England, where they rollicked through the novel until Mrs. Grundy and George Eliot

packed them off to the reform school. But the rogues of the seventeenth century were jolly rogues. They always had their tongues in their cheeks, and success always rewarded their ingenious audacities. Perhaps the moulds of society had not hardened as they have now, or there was less pressure of hungry generations. Or, more probably, pity had not come in to undermine the foundations.

The corrosive of pity, which had attacked the steel girders of our civilization even before the work of building was completed, has brought about what Gilbert Murray, in speaking of Greek thought, calls the failure of nerve. In the seventeenth century men still had the courage of their egoism. The world was a bad job to be made the best of, all hope lay in driving a good bargain with the conductors of life everlasting. By the end of the nineteenth century the life everlasting had grown cobwebby, the French Revolution had filled men up with extravagant hopes of the perfectability of this world, humanitarianism had instilled an abnormal sensitiveness to pain, to one's own pain, and to the pain of one's neighbours. Baroja's outcasts are no longer jolly knaves who'll murder a man for a nickel and go on their road singing "Over the Hills and Far Away," they are men who have not had the will-power to continue in the fight for bread, they are men whose nerve has failed, who live furtively on the outskirts, snatching a little joy here and there, drugging their hunger with gorgeous mirages.

One often thinks of Gorky in reading Baroja, mainly because of the contrast. Instead of the tumultuous spring-freshet of a new race that drones behind every page of the Russian, there is the cold despair of an old race, of a race that has lived long under a formula of life to which it has sacrificed much, only to discover in the end that the formula does not hold.

These are the last paragraphs of "Mala Hierba" (Wild Grass), the middle volume of Baroja's trilogy on the life of the very poor in Madrid:

They talked. Manuel felt irritation against the whole world, hatred, up to that moment pent up within him against society, against man. . . .

'Honestly,' he ended by saying, 'I wish it would rain dynamite for a week, and that the Eternal Father would come tumbling down in cinders.'

He invoked crazily all the destructive powers to reduce to ashes this miserable society.

Jesus listened with attention.

'You are an anarchist,' he told him.

'I?'

'Yes. So am I.'

'Since when?'

'Since I have seen the infamies committed in the world; since I have seen how coldly they give to death a bit of human flesh; since I have seen how men die abandoned in the streets and hospitals,' answered Jesus with a certain solemnity.

Manuel was silent. The friends walked without speaking round the Ronda de Segovia, and sat down on a bench in the little gardens of the Virgen del Puerto.

The sky was superb, crowded with stars; the Milky Way crossed its immense blue concavity. The geometric figure of the Great Bear glittered very high. Arcturus and Vega shone softly in that ocean of stars.

In the distance the dark fields, scratched with lines of lights, seemed the sea in a harbour and the strings of lights the illumination of a wharf.

The damp, warm air came laden with odours of woodland plants wilted by the heat.

'How many stars,' said Manuel. 'What can they be?'

'They are worlds, endless worlds.'

'I don't know why it doesn't make me feel better to see this sky so beautiful, Jesus. Do you think there are men in those worlds?' asked Manuel.

'Perhaps; why not?'

'And are there prisons too, and judges and gambling dens and police? . . . Do you think so?'

Jesus did not answer. After a while he began talking with a calm voice of his dream of an idyllic humanity, a sweet, pitiful dream, noble and childish.

In his dream, man, lead by a new idea, reached a higher state.

No more hatreds, no more rancours. Neither judges, nor police, nor soldiers, nor authority. In the wide fields of the earth free men worked in the sunlight. The law of love had taken the place of the law of duty, and the horizons of humanity grew every moment wider, wider and more azure.

And Jesus continued talking of a vague ideal of love and justice, of energy and pity; and those words of his, chaotic, incoherent, fell like balm on Manuel's ulcerated spirit. Then they were both silent, lost in their thoughts, looking at the night.

An august joy shone in the sky, and the vague sensation of space, of the infinity of those imponderable worlds, filled their spirits with a delicious calm.

III

SPAIN is the classic home of the anarchist. A bleak upland country mostly, with a climate giving all varieties of temperature, from moist African heat to dry Siberian cold, where people have lived until very recently—and do still—in villages hidden away among the bare ribs of the mountains, or in the indented coast plains, where every region is cut off from every other by high passes and defiles, flaming hot in summer and freezing cold in winter, where the Iberian race has grown up centreless. The pueblo, the village community, is the only form of social cohesion that really has roots in the past. On these free towns, empires have time and again been imposed by force. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Catholic monarchy wielded the sword of the faith to such good effect that communal feeling was killed and the Spanish genius was forced to ingrow into the mystical realm where every ego expanded in the solitude of God. The eighteenth century reduced God to an abstraction, and the nineteenth brought pity and the mad hope of righting the wrongs of society. The Spaniard, like his own Don Quixote, mounted the war-horse of his idealism and set out to free the oppressed, alone.

But the anarchism of Baroja is of another sort. He says somewhere that the only part a man of the middle classes can play in the social revolution is destructive. He has not undergone the discipline necessary for a builder, which can come only from common slavery in the industrial machine. His slavery has been an isolated slavery which has unfitted him for ever from becoming truly part of a community. He can use in only one way the power of knowledge which training has given him. His great mission is to put the acid test to existing institutions, to strip them of their veils. This does not mean that Baroja writes with his social conscience. He is too much of a novelist for that, too deeply interested in people as such. But it is certain that a profound sense of the evil of existing institutions lies behind every page he has written, and, occasionally, only occasionally, he allows himself to hope that something better may come out of the turmoil of our age of transition.

Only a man who had felt all this very deeply could be so sensitive to the new—if the word were not so threadbare I should call it religious—spirit which is shaking the foundations of the world's social pyramid, perhaps only another example of the failure of nerve, perhaps the expression of a new will among mankind.

In "Aurora Roja" (Red Dawn), the last of the Madrid trilogy, about the same Manuel who is the central figure of "Mala Hierba," he writes:

At first it bored him, but later, little by little, he felt himself carried away by what he was reading. First he

was enthusiastic about Mirabeau; then about the Girondins; Vergniau, Petion, Condorcet; then about Danton; then he began to think that Robespierre was the true revolutionary; afterwards St. Just; but in the end it was the gigantic figure of Danton that thrilled him most.

Manuel felt great satisfaction at having read that history. Often he said to himself:

'What does it matter now if I am a dead-beat and good-for-nothing? I've read the history of the French Revolution; I believe I shall know how to be worthy.'

After Michelet, he read a book about '48; then another on the Commune, by Louise Michel, and all this produced in him a great admiration for French Revolutionists. What men! After the colossal figures of the Convention: Babœuf, Proudhon, Blanqui, Bandin, Deleschize, Rochefort, Félix Pyat, Vallu. . . . What people!

"What does it matter now if I am a dead-beat. . . . I believe I shall know how to be worthy." In those two phrases lies all the power of revolutionary faith. And how like they are to phrases out of the gospels, those older expressions of the hope and misery of another society in decay. That is the spirit which, for good or evil, is stirring throughout Europe to-day, among the poor and the hungry and the oppressed and the outcast, a new affirmation of the rights and duties of men. Baroja has felt this profoundly, and has presented it, but without abandoning the function of the novelist, which is to tell stories about people. Baroja is never a propagandist.

IV

"I HAVE never hidden my admirations in literature. They have been and are Dickens, Balzac, Poe, Dostoevsky and, now, Stendhal. . . ." So writes Baroja in the preface to the Nelson edition of "La Dama Errante" (The Wandering Lady). He follows particularly in the footprints of Balzac in that he is primarily a historian of morals, who has made a fairly consistent attempt to cover the world he lives in. With Dostoevsky there is a kinship in the passionate hatred of cruelty and stupidity that crops out everywhere in his work. I have never found any trace of influence of the other three in his writings, though I can not say I have ever tried to do so. To be sure, there are a few early sketches in the manner of Poe, but in respect to form he is much more in the purely chaotic tradition of the picaresque novel he despises than in that of the American theorist.

Baroja's most important work lies in the four series of novels of the Spanish life he has lived—in Madrid, in the provincial towns where he practised medicine, and in the Basque country where he was brought up. The foundation of these was laid by "El Arbol de la Ciencia" (The Tree of Knowledge), a novel half autobiographical describing the life and death of a doctor, who studied medicine in Madrid and practised in two Spanish provincial towns. Its tremendously vivid description of the weight of inertia deadening intellectual effort made a very profound impression in Spain. Two novels about the anarchist movement followed, "La Dama Errante," which describes the state of mind of forward-looking Spaniards at the time of the famous anarchist attempt on the lives of the king and queen on the day of their marriage, and "La Ciudad de la Niebla," about the Spanish colony in London. Then came the series called "La Busca" (The Search) which, to me, is Baroja's best work, and one of the great things published in Europe in the last decade. It deals with the lowest and most miserable life of Madrid and is written with a cold acidity which Maupassant would have envied, and is permeated by a human vividness that I do not think Maupassant could have achieved. All three novels, "La Busca," "Mala Hierba," and "Aurora Roja" deal with the drifting of a typical uneducated Spanish boy, son of a maid of all

work in a boarding-house, through different strata of Madrid life. They give a sense of unadorned reality very rare in any literature, and besides their power they are as novels immensely stimulating as sheer natural history. The type of the *golfo* is a literary discovery comparable with that of Sancho Panza by Cervantes, or the Trotaconventos of the Archpriest of Hita.

Nothing that Baroja has written since is quite on the same level. The series "El Pasado" (The Past) gives entertaining pictures of provincial life. "Las Inquietudes de Shantí Andia" (The Anxieties of Shantí Andia), a story of Basque seamen which contains a charming picture of a childhood in a seaside village in Guipuzcoa, delightful as it is to read, is too much muddled in romantic claptrap to add much to his fame. "El Mundo es Así" (The World Is Like That) expresses, rather lamely, it seems to me, the meditations of a disenchanted revolutionist. The latest series, "Memorias de un Hombre de Accion" (Memoirs of a Man of Action), a set of yarns about the revolutionary period in Spain at the beginning of the nineteenth century, though amusing, is more than anything else an attempt to escape in a jolly romantic past the realities of the gloomy present. "César ó Nada," translated into English under the title of "Cæsar or Nothing," is also less acid and less effective than his earlier novels. That is probably why it was chosen for translation into English. But then we all know how anxious our publishers are to furnish food easily digested by weak American stomachs.

It is silly to judge any Spanish novelist from the point of view of form. Improvisation is the very soul of Spanish writing. In thinking back over books of Baroja's one has read, one remembers more descriptions of places and people than of anything else. In the end it is natural history rather than dramatic creation. But a natural history that gives one the pictures etched with vitriol of Spanish life at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries which one gets in these novels of Baroja's is very near the highest sort of creation. If we could inject into American writers some of the virus of Baroja's intense sense of reality, it would be worth giving up all those stale conquests of form we inherited from Poe and O. Henry. The following, again from the preface of "La Dama Errante," is Baroja's own statement of his aims. And certainly he has realized them.

Probably a book like "La Dama Errante" is not of the sort that lives very long; it is not a painting with aspirations towards the museum, but an impressionist canvas; perhaps as a work it has too much asperity, is too hard, not serene enough.

This ephemeral character of my work does not displease me. We are men of the day, people in love with the passing moment, with all that is fugitive and transitory, and the lasting quality of our work preoccupies us little, so little that it can hardly be said to preoccupy us at all.

JOHN DOS PASSOS.

POETRY.

MORNING-GLORIES.

Deep in twisted tendrils
And heart-shaped leaves of green,
Frail white morning-glories
At the daylight seen,

Fading ere the nighttime,
Drooping, deceived—
Was life, then, so different
From what you had believed?

MARY CAROLYN DAVIES.

THE DEMIGOD.

(From the Russian of Sergeev-Tzenski.)

IN wealthy Corinth, at the house of the eminent Megacles, stood rhapsodists and sang.

There were two of them—a youth and an old man.

First sang the old man with a broken, decrepit voice, and the youth accompanied gloomily on a seven-stringed cithara.

What can an old man sing? He sang that in olden times the sun's heat was warmer, the fruit's growth heavier, the wine more intoxicating. He sang that in olden times lived heroes, and that no one is come to take their places. He sang of the sad human shades roaming in Hades's dark abysses.

And Megacles was feasting. On the long veranda lay the guests at the table drinking the thick Cyprian wine from rich cups.

And nobody listened to the old man.

When he had ended his song the young rhapsodist began. With a sonorous and compelling voice he sang songs new and strange to the ear. By a mighty master these songs were made, and they gave praise to the proud human mind.

"Man is a demigod," the songs proclaimed, "but the time will come, and he will be God."

"Man is in dreams," the songs proclaimed, "but the time will come, and the dreams will be reality."

"To the glistening depths of new ages is chained his gaze."

"The time will come when infants will not deign to lisp of that which was."

"Lord of his present, creator of his future, rebellious ruler of all. Man will stand on an earth vanquished by him."

"And when he masters all, he will be God."

While yet were ringing the last sounds of the voice and the cithara, Megacles's guests rose from the table to look at the singer.

And he stood there, young and tall, with his black curls and a proud countenance.

"Who composed these songs?" asked the guests.

"I heard them when yet a boy," answered the rhapsodist, "in native Eanthia, from Demades, the Athenian exile."

On the next day three wealthy Corinthian youths went in a ship over the Corinthian Bay to little Eanthia, that they might honour Demades as a demigod.

"He must be as tall as this mast!" said one of them, with sparkling eyes.

"He must be as mighty as this sea in a storm!" said the other.

"He must be as beautiful as the evening star in this sky!" said the third dreamily.

In little Eanthia they were shown Demades, the Athenian exile.

On a dirty mat in the yard sat an ancient cripple. His head was gray with remnants of entangled, disorderly hair.

With black, fleshless hands he greedily and diligently sought parasites in his ragged tunic.

Translated by J. M. CHAITKIN.

A FORGOTTEN AMERICAN CRITIC.

FIRST of all, to show that Percival Pollard, however little resonance his name may have in contemporary letters, is worth reading about, let me present two or three brief quotations from his writings:

Literature is the advertisement of one's attitude toward life. It is the record of a mood. It is the impress, writ in wax, of some mask we wore at some moment. It is a quantity of conflicting things. It is revelation, and it is masquerade. It has as many facets as life itself; it is at once chameleon and sphinx.

Pedantry and profusion are both to be avoided; I interpret preciosity more narrowly. It has, for me, reticence, music and simplicity. Behind it is a conscience that feels the pull of the ideal; a sense of responsibility toward the language; an aversion to cheapening, for the mob's entertainment, all one's finest views of life.

In America you may be entertaining, but you must be innocuous withal; if you tell ironic truths, declare your personality—pagan, philosophic, humanistic or whatever it may be that is not petticoated or puritanic—in this or that artistic medium, you risk being disdained by the merchants in control.

These excerpts are, I believe, representative of Pollard's English in his most personal and characteristic manner. But he had many other manners; for he was a really flexible writer.

"True style," says Willard Huntington Wright, "one which attests to mastery, is an ability to change one's

manner at random so as to harmonize the expression with the thing expressed. A great stylist can write suavely, simply and delicately, as well as robustly, complexly and brutally. Shakespeare is a stylist. Pater is the negation of style." To harmonize the expression with the particular book he was criticizing seems to have been precisely what Pollard attempted. He wrote about the shoddy "sex" novels of Lucas Malet and Kate Chopin with the same terminology and hollowness of manner he found in their books, but he contrived a dexterous and edifying twist to their phraseology, and the reader was warned from the trash under discussion quite as much by this clever and indirect exposure of cheapness as by anything pointedly derogatory that Pollard had written. On the other hand, he reviewed "Aphrodite" in prose almost as singing, as chaste, as artistic as Pierre Louys's; he gave Wilde brilliant epigrammatic praise; he discoursed on Wedekind in hard unsentimental outline; and Schnitzler called forth from him a delicate, well-mannered, sophisticated chapter.

Here and there, notably in Pollard's disgust at the poor enunciation of his fellow-citizens, appears—in the germ—the effective drum-banging technique of his friend, H. L. Mencken. Mr. Mencken—as all of us know—bangs away at everything, hammer and tongs, whether in defence or offence. He provides the same sort of humorous and animated spectacle, whether he is considering Joseph Conrad, Thorstein Veblen or Southern lynchings. But Pollard would have displayed a different and appropriate mask for each. He liked to practise, now with a stout oak-staff, now with a whip-like rapier, and now with not over-padded boxing gloves. But never did he scuffle in the street with bare knuckles. Always he was skilled and effective.

Furthermore, inside every verbal garment he donned there was always Pollard. And this Pollard was a gentleman, an aristocrat, a well-mannered and sensitive scholar. He expressed himself honestly, clearly, forcibly: he had charm, distinction, breeding: his sentences and paragraphs had an individual and attractive carriage, not ostentatious, not obtrusive, but quietly different from those of others—the same effect that the man of taste achieves in his clothes. There was restraint and there was reticence of a truly aristocratic kind in his writing. Behind his style was a highly cultivated man whom the more civilized, after the first acquaintance, soon come to admire, respect and love.

Lastly, he strove to be entertaining. He rode no high-stepping, grim, tense horse of style. He did not disdain anecdotes and what he called digressions. As a matter of fact, he was always apposite. His prose was never tired: it was ever engaging, charming, youthful, fresh. In his own sense, he was precious; that is, he had "reticence, music and simplicity." And he fulfilled eminently in his own sentence-building his definition of style: "Style, to the artist in life and literature, is at once a window and a mask."

A fortunate conjunction of circumstances created the cosmopolitan that Percival Pollard was. He adopted the United States as his country in 1885, but he had been born in Pomerania sixteen years previously of English-German parentage. He went to England for his higher education, and then returned to America in 1891 to enter journalism, via the St. Joseph (Mo.) *News*.

From this moment he was absorbed in editorial and literary work. At one time he edited and wrote most of the *Echo*, a bi-weekly, in Chicago. He contributed, along with Huneker, Meltzer and Vance Thompson, to the *Criterion*. From 1897 to his death at his home in Baltimore in 1911 he was the reviewer for *Town Topics*. He was enthusiastically involved with many of the little pamphlets and magazines of artistic revolt which Young America—dazed by the growing vulgarity wrought by an arrogant materialism—put forth so bravely and so hopelessly in his life-time. He published several volumes of fiction, translated in book form three tributes to Wilde,

had two plays (one written in collaboration with Leo Dietrichstein) produced in New York, and brought out—his most notable contribution—two volumes of criticism. He followed in three languages the literatures of Germany, France, England and America. He was forever travelling and observing with shrewd, humorous and sophisticated eyes the life and art of Berlin, Paris, London and New York. He was a close friend of Ambrose Bierce, Richard Mansfield, William Marion Reedy and H. L. Mencken. "I had affection for him as well as respect," Mr. Mencken writes, "for he was a capital companion at the *Biertisch* and was never too busy to waste a lecture on my lone ear—say on Otto Julius Bierbaum, or Anatole France, or the technique of the novel, or the scoundrelism of publishers."

The two volumes of criticism were "Their Day in Court" (1909) and "Masks and Minstrels of New Germany" (1911). The core of "Masks and Minstrels" was the gallant *Ueberbreitl'* movement, its forerunners, its great figures—Liliencron, Hartleben, and Bierbaum—and its aftermath. In the minstrels of the *Ueberbreitl'* Pollard found those he could love: he responded avidly to *Die Insel*, *Simplicissimus* and *Jugend*: he was in complete sympathy with the artistic credo of Green Germany. And about all this he wrote intelligently, warmly, appreciatively. There are brilliant chapters in the book on Bierbaum, Wedekind and Schnitzler.

"Their Day in Court" was the trial before a remarkably fair, learned and sensitive judge of American literature. A host of Continental witnesses were called, the stand was crowded with a strange assortment of native exhibits culled from a period of twenty years, all kinds of evidence were produced and searched. The verdict was: "*Basta!*" And yet the entire courtroom could feel that the judge hoped—and anxiously hoped—that when American literature should next come up for judgment it would present a far stronger case. Most of "Their Day in Court" had been printed in detached essays in the *Town Topics* and *Criterion*. Cut from their files and joined together with considerable skill, these essays constituted a book of criticism which for its completeness, its dramatic quality, its crushing, overtoppling testimony to the rightness of its author's point of view is unexampled in American book-reporting. Its honesty and forthrightness were discomfiting. And, as discomfiting manifestations were more easily blanketed in 1909 than they are in 1920, "Their Day in Court" was rendered almost soundless on its appearance.

Percival Pollard's cardinal critical beliefs and practices may be outlined about as follows, mainly in his own words. It is possible to dissent here and there from his theory; but before quarrelling with a man who possessed so discriminating a catholicity, one must be very sure of one's ground:

1. Life is the great thing; literature is merely an incident.
2. The wisest of all collectors are those, I think, who concern themselves simply with garnering emotion. They are able to dispense with any such crude capital as mere coin; their chief requisite need be no more than a nose for the naive.
3. Only as we ourselves have vividly felt this or that sensation in life or the arts, can we pass such sensation on. [Pollard was, in essence, the personal, impressionistic, prejudiced critic. But what engaging prejudices he had, and how slightly did they pervert his judgments!]
4. Temperamentally I have never been able to distinguish the murder from the murderer; denouncing a crime against literature has never seemed to me so efficacious, or so honest, as denouncing the criminal.
5. It has ever been one of my critical tenets that if you can not entertain the public, to attempt instructing it is madness.
6. A literature without critics is like a park without a gate. All the tramps and all the vermin can get in, and presently the proper denizens of the park wish nothing better than to be somewhere else.
7. A critic's soul does not always find its adventures among masterpieces. Often it is from the most insignificant impetus that a valuable achievement comes. Time and again has a worthless book been useful to the critic who was greater than what he criticized. . . . It can not too soon be impressed upon you as one of the articles of my critical

creed: The critic is mostly greater than the stuff he works in.

8. It is not the survival of the fittest, but the survival of the average that we should dread.

9. Art for art's sake may be an absurd shibboleth; yet it is not so damnable as art for dollars' sake, unrelieved by another aim or ambition. [Without the rebellious social sense of the more broadly developed moderns of to-day, Pollard was strongly in revolt against the vulgarity of commercialism. He castigated the quantity-production of "best sellers," the influence of a debased journalism, the prostitution of artistic, critical and intellectual integrity].

These nine points will give some fair idea of the temperament and draught of this critic, ignored during his life and almost completely forgotten since his death.

Occasionally, in his writings, he remarked that he was ahead of his time, that his ambassadorship of artistic novelties had been premature. Certainly his death in 1911 was premature. He was a cosmopolitan, but not rootless. In American literature his hope was centred: for its development he exerted his best and most loving efforts. The choice fruits of his cosmopolitanism he poured out for America, almost wistfully. And then he died, having lived through a provincial blackness before the dawn, died just as the decade began which was to brighten a little the prospect for our native arts, died before one could no longer say that there were only two or three honest critics in the United States. There is something vital, something solid and even brilliant, to be discovered in American criticism to-day. Our critics—Willard Huntington Wright, H. L. Mencken, James Huneker, Francis Hackett, a half dozen more—are carrying their department through to a powerful and mature prestige. Pollard was the lonely, chivalric, dauntless leader of these men, the first to enter the fray, a solitary lance who saved the honour of his profession until reinforcements came.

Our age would be richer if Percival Pollard were still living.

GORHAM B. MUNSON.

MISCELLANY.

A FRIEND of mine who has lately returned from a trip to Europe tells me that in London they have two unfailing topics of conversation, the weather and the possibility of a general election. On the Continent, he says, everybody interrogated him on the Prohibition Amendment and the Presidential election. By some strange perversion Europeans seem to regard the former as a joke and take the latter seriously. But when the drink and vote situations are made clear to them they naturally cease to discuss the Presidency.

ONE gets a curious light on American efficiency, my friend tells me, in talking with some Europeans about their experience with American business men. For example, a certain large dealer on the Continent made heavy purchases at the conclusion of the war. American manufacturers seemed panicky and sold at low prices; English manufacturers, however, kept their prices up. Somehow the American firms failed to make good, deliveries were not according to agreement and various difficulties were encountered. Then American prices began to jump inordinately, with the result that, though the American patterns and quality were satisfactory, our manufacturers have lost much of the confidence of their erstwhile European customers, while the British continuously deliver the goods at prices only normally increased. This story may not be generally applicable to American business transactions with Europe but my friend assures me that it is the tale of at least one great European house.

In his amazing autobiography "Steeplejack" Mr. Huneker tells a story of a corn-cutter at Bayreuth who, when questioned by the redoubtable and curious James as to what kind of a looking man Wagner was, replied that he was a little bow-legged Jew who always wore a long cloak to hide his crooked legs. This reminds me of an-

other story that once upon a time I picked up in Bayreuth. An old tanner who knew Seidl when he was associated with Wagner told me the master was not a Jew but that he had all the musical genius of the race. Seidl did not think that Wagner was a Jew, but that doesn't prove very much. Wagner was a revolutionist and that fact may explain why so many people have held to what I may perhaps call the Huneckerian theory of race in connexion with music. The Jews have certainly provided the world with many of its greatest revolutionists. Indeed the race has provided pretty nearly every department of life with an outstanding genius. The old German who said "Ach God, the Jews must be a great people to have given us Moses, Jesus and Offenbach" seems to me to clinch the matter.

SEIDL was always very fond of telling stories about Wagner. One I remember may be worth telling here. On one occasion Wagner and Seidl were waiting for a train at Bayreuth station. It was a wet and stormy day and they were cooped up in the waiting room. But Wagner was very happy telling jokes and every now and then stopping to chat with the townsfolk. Suddenly he stopped before an old woman seated on a bench, and his eye fell upon a market basket on the floor before her. Seidl noticed that the lid of the basket was moved spasmodically every now and then as if it contained some living thing that was trying to get out. Wagner bent down, looked the woman in the face and asked humorously, "Who is the gentleman you have in the basket?" He thought it might be a rabbit or a fowl, as he told Seidl afterwards. The woman, knowing him, entered into the humour of his mood and playfully jumped the lid off the basket and revealed a live fish lying on some hay. In a moment Wagner was furious with anger. "Bring me a knife, bring me a knife," he cried, and Seidl, producing a pocket knife, stood by and watched Wagner kill the fish. He threw it back in the basket, stamped his foot and shouted, "Oh, you terrible, cruel woman." The woman after her first astonishment was very much upset and cried bitterly, but after a while when Wagner had regained his composure he soothed her and gave her some money to pay for the fish.

A FRIENDLY correspondent who is travelling in Sweden has sent me an interesting letter from which I am tempted to quote the following paragraphs: "Sweden has been without a war for so many years—more than a hundred—that in the natural course its heroes are men of letters, science and art rather than of arms. The schools, museums, municipalities and Government aid in fostering knowledge of the work of native scholars, though not in any chauvinistic way. Everywhere the native industries— weaving, woodworking, metal working—are generously assisted, and only recently Stockholm had a week's exposition of such work as well as of furniture, glass-ware, pottery, laces, all produced in Sweden and based on traditional designs. The National Museum in Stockholm, though rich in old masters, prides itself on its Swedish collection which ranges from the conventional school influenced by seventeenth and eighteenth century Continental painters to moderns who make one's hair stand on end. Naturally, much space is given to the great trio, Liljefors, Larssen and Zorn. Numerous examples of these three masters are to be found in the homes of Sweden's art collectors; national pride has tended to keep their work from being dissipated."

"Just now" continues my correspondent, "Sweden teems with Zorn etchings, paintings, sculptures and reproductions. Every art dealer exhibits his work, every bookshop shows books about him, every stationer displays postcard prints of his pictures. His name is on every lip, and those who knew him are tireless in relating anecdotes about him. He was always true to his beloved Dalecarlia, whose peasants are known the world over through his needle and brush. He was not content merely to

picture the people; he made an intensive study of their history and customs. He followed Dalecarlians to Minnesota and to Jerusalem in order to study their transplantation of native habits. In Zorn's home in Mora there is a rich collection of ancient and modern Dalecarliana, and he even went so far as to move an entire old building to his place. He refused to insure his treasures, which included many examples of his own work and gifts from his contemporaries, because he said that no money indemnity could possibly replace them. It is hoped that the collection will pass from Zorn's widow to the State."

"As one enters Mora—a typical small village in the most picturesque province of Sweden—a simple, human statue of Gustavus Vasa, the national hero, greets one. This gift by Zorn to his people stands on a green hillock, placed with a charming unpretentiousness. Yet, as one wanders around to see the figure from the back, one is startled by the impressiveness of the man silhouetted against the sky and the artist's perfect calculation is apparent. A stone's throw away is Zorn's home, its simplicity unspoiled by the visible signs of his work, so harmoniously are they disposed. In a niche, above the doorway, stands a small model of the Vasa, enshrined like a saint. And separated only by a lane is Zorn's resting place in the church grounds. At first he was to be buried in the yard with his fellows, but the Mora congregation decided that its hero must be honoured with their best, so, in the centre of the green before the church there is a fresh grave on which wreathes and flowers still lie."

JOURNEYMAN.

THE THEATRE.

TARKINGTON VERSUS TROTZKY.

WHEN Mr. Booth Tarkington's place in American literature has been more definitely determined, it will be time enough to consider at some length his odd relation to the American theatre. The subject will be full of interest, for it will throw a considerable light on the art of playwrighting and especially on the art of writing problem-drama. Mr. Galsworthy once said that problem drama, the drama of social purpose, is the most difficult kind to write, and one is not inclined to disagree. The reason is simple enough, too, because, as Mr. Galsworthy again points out, "character is plot," character development, character clash, is the essence of drama; and unless the problem, the "message," the propaganda of a play is conditioned by the characters, not the characters set up as puppets to spout the theme, the result may be a sermon or an oration, but it is never an absorbing and illusive play.

It has been, on several occasions, Mr. Tarkington's perverse ambition to write problem-drama. He has never done it successfully; he has often done it ridiculously, and never more so than in his latest attempt, "Poldekin," now being acted in New York by Mr. George Arliss. It seems at first glance almost incredible that the same man who wrote the delightful, deft and richly comic "Clarence" could be guilty of "Poldekin." One is forced to believe either that Mr. Tarkington is quite incapable of self-criticism, or that he has never fully grasped the underlying principles of drama.

"Poldekin" is a play designed to warn us of the attempts of the Russian Soviet Republic to bring about revolution in the United States, and to render such attempts ridiculous, to render the philosophy of bolshevism ridiculous, and finally to show one of the "red" missionaries himself converted to one hundred per cent Americanism as a grand climax needing only

Mr. G. M. Cohan and the American flag to make it complete. Such a scheme for a play, of course, could hardly fail to meet with the approval of the American Legion, our innumerable "defence" leagues, Governor Coolidge, the *New York Times*, John Spargo, and enough other people theoretically to keep the theatre full for a year. Only people don't go to the theatre to see a scheme for a play—they go to see a play. They go to see people—that is, characters—in action. "Character is plot."

It is, of course, quite needless to argue any of the ideas and theories Mr. Tarkington puts in the mouths of his bolshevists, either before they leave Russia or after they reach America. It doesn't matter whether he got these arguments from newspaper dispatches, or from the official text of a speech by Lenin. The trouble is that in "Poldekin" they do not emerge from the lips of living people. They are spouted by puppets. Speeches and puppets are alike manipulated to prove a thesis; the problem is not set and resolved by the inevitable actions of vital characters. "Character is plot." Mr. Tarkington sets up a row of little straw-men labelled bolshevists, and bowls them more or less neatly over with the preamble to the Declaration of Independence. This may be exhilarating for him, but it completely fails to satisfy the average theatre-goer, whatever his political or economic beliefs. It suggests, as Mr. Heywood Brown pleasantly remarked, that Penrod had a hand in the play.

I well remember a drama of Russian revolution, called "On the Eve," produced about thirteen years ago at the old Irving Place Theatre, in New York, and later (badly) in English. Here, as in "Poldekin," was a girl who was dedicating her life to a deed of violence—or perhaps it was the hero, it doesn't matter; what matters was that before the deed was done the two pathetic lovers found

A place to stand and love in for a day,
With darkness and the death hour rounding it. . . .

—tragic, heart-breaking figures, in whose fate, whatever beliefs the dramatist put into their souls, you could not fail to take an interest. If Mr. Tarkington is determined to cross pens with world-shaping philosophies, from such sterner stuff must his protagonists be hewn.

With the potent aid of Mr. Arliss, an actor of deft, precise method, silken execution, and great intelligence, Mr. Tarkington does succeed in making a character of Poldekin, his whimsical hero who is thought a fool but turns out to possess the charitable wisdom of the naïve, inquiring mind. In the second act of the play, Poldekin is seen going about New York seeking for an American, and when he finds one—pretty lady, negro, what not—he asks him what America means, in every case to be greeted first by a vacant stare and then by loud peals of laughter. The quaintness of the questioner, the odd sources whence he seeks information, the utter naturalness of the guffaws he gets by way of reply, make an act of significant comedy. If the rest of the play were held to the same key, followed by the same method, all might be well. But, alas! those terrible men of straw come trooping back.

The fact of the matter seems to be that while Mr. Tarkington can bring to the drama certain invaluable qualities of shrewd observation and—as in "Clarence"—deft invention when his imagination is working, he can not as yet bring what may be called constructive intellect. Except for writers possessing that profound imagination which can fuse all elements, create any and all characters and situations from a hint, what is chiefly required in play-making is intellect, cool, calculating and, above all, critical. If character

is not felt, it must be reasoned out; and nowhere is this so necessary as in the drama of social purpose, where characters must be created to function plausibly and along definitely-limited lines, which yet must be concealed, else the play becomes mechanical and unreal. "Poldekin" suggests that Mr. Tarkington is an instinctive artist within the confines of his observed world, but that beyond those confines he wanders vainly, because instinct can not find the way and intellect has not come to his rescue.

WALTER PRICHARD EATON.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

RESPECTABILITY OR SELF-RESPECT.

SIRS: Mr. Harvey's original and delightful commentaries on the plays of Euripides have interested me very much. He clears away much useless lumber, revealing these Euripidean Greeks as actual, flesh-and-blood people, and not, as they have always seemed to me, mere automata mouthing the virtuous sentiments of the author.

But there is one point in the second article, "Mrs. Grundy of Athens," which I should like to question a little. Mr. Harvey says: "Euripides does not mean that woman hates war because it is war, or even primarily on account of its horrors . . . the trouble is that war is the worst foe of woman's respectability, of her good name." It seems to me that it is unjust to assume that woman hates war only because she fears to lose the "wifehood, motherhood and honours of domestic sovereignty" which are the outward signs of her right to command the respect of her neighbours. It is only as these things help to preserve her inward state of self-respect that she fears to lose them. It is not so much her fear, I submit, of losing the regard of other people that makes her detest war (when she does detest it) as it is her fear of losing her regard for herself—and a woman who is "regarded as the legitimate spoils of war" must necessarily become as bruised in spirit as a man would be if manhandled by an adversary stronger than he.

Respectability and self-respect may have very little in common. The prostitute Maslova, in Tolstoy's "What is To Be Done" had a great deal of respect for herself and her profession; but she would hardly have been considered respectable by the social leaders of Moscow. It is this sense of her own worth, the right to think well of herself, that a woman must fear to lose, just as a man would fear to lose it; and I think Mr. Harvey will agree that it is a much more praiseworthy and potent reason for her hatred of war than would be the mere fear of losing caste in the eyes of the community. I am, etc.,

L. C. F.

THE WAY THEY STRIKE IN SÖDERMANLAND.

SIRS: Over here in Södermanland, one of Sweden's richest provinces, there is a strike which reflects the progress of labour organization among agricultural workers, but at the same time shows up the incongruity of the modern weapon of the proletariat when directed against a system that resembles a benevolent feudalism. In this particular province there are many "gentleman farmers," usually well-to-do merchants who spend much of their time on their estates which are only a few hours from the capital. These landlords differ from the usual rich man who runs a "show" place in that they study their problems scientifically and spend a good deal of time in personal supervision; they live in close relations with their peasant-employees and their families, because the holdings are generally such as will maintain a given number of helpers the year round, thus they know nothing of the problem of the migratory worker. The wages are paid in cash, grain and housing, the latter item insuring permanency for both farmer and peasant, and giving the latter the chance to run his own little farm.

Throughout the districts in which large estates prevail the agricultural workers are unionized, and they have contracts with the landlords who, too, are banded together; but only in Södermanland is there a strike. It is pretty much a leaders' strike for, though the demands for more money, more grain and better housing (or, failing the latter, a money equivalent) are definitely formulated, the peasants themselves are somewhat bewildered. This is shown by the fact that in one part of the province they refuse to treat with employers because the latter belong to the employers' asso-

ciation and in other parts they refuse to treat because the employers do not belong. This bewilderment might seem to be only peasant cunning if it were not that on some farms, where the men continue to do necessary work, they engage in arguments as to whether they are on strike or not. But in localities where the strike is definite and serious, the labour necessary to the well-being of cattle is permitted.

There is no sign at present of a sympathetic strike in the neighbouring provinces: the labourers there are abiding by their contracts. Neither is there any thought of strike-breaking *à la* U. S. A. Instead, we have the spectacle of Stockholm merchants, manufacturers and bankers quitting their offices for days at a time, helping each other out in saving crops; women and girls of the leisure class working in field and dairy and stable. Nobody expects or preaches violence, there are no reprisals, the workers continue to live in their homes on the landlords' estates, and the individual peasant readily admits the absence of personal grievances, admits that his pay is adequate according to old standards and that under present conditions in the building trades neither the peasants nor their employers can meet the housing demands of the leaders. It is a courteous but a dogged war, and it seems unlikely that there will be either a glorious victory or a humiliating defeat. I am, etc.,
Stockholm, Sweden.

SVEN ANDERSEN.

THE MOHAMMEDAN GRIEVANCE.

SIRS: It is really astonishing how little the world realizes what a vast amount of Mohammedan territory has been seized by Great Britain and is now incorporated in the British Empire. For more than one hundred and fifty years the British Government, like the governments of other Christian Powers, has been extending its dominion by force of arms over the Mohammedan peoples in Asia and Africa wherever it could find a pretext, with the result that when the great war began in 1914, King George held three or four times as many Mohammedan subjects under his sway as any Mohammedan ruler in the world. The war, we were told, was fought in the interest of freedom, and to prevent, in the future, weaker peoples from being conquered and ruled against their will by stronger nations. Mohammedan peoples may therefore be pardoned for believing that further aggressions upon them would cease. But they have been quickly disillusioned. No sooner was the war over than the grabbing of territory, mainly Mohammedan territory, began again. In addition to the vast areas which Britain claimed in Eastern, Western, Central and Southern Africa—great empires in extent, and mostly Mohammedan in faith—she proceeded at once to make sure of her suzerainty over Mohammedan Arabia, to fasten permanently her grip on Mohammedan Egypt, to seize Mohammedan Persia, and to insist on such a break-up of the Mohammedan Turkish Empire as would leave by far the largest part of it, including all of Mesopotamia and Palestine, under British rule.

This breaking of faith—for many Mohammedans had supported the Allies in the war and had been promised that they and their religion should be protected—has been too much for the Mohammedan world. And, the last straw is the treatment of Turkey. Not that the Turks are the highest type of Mohammedans; they are not. Not that they are specially beloved by other Mohammedans; they are not. But it happens that Turkey is the last independent Mohammedan nation of any considerable strength left in the world; and, moreover, it is the seat of the Khalifate—that is to say, the Sultan of Turkey claims to be the "Khalif" or religious successor of Mohammed, and hence the highest ecclesiastical official (in a sense, the Pope) of the Moslem peoples.

In India, whose more than seventy million Moslems had been loyal to England during the war, indignation has been especially great. The people feel that they have been betrayed. Here is one of the main causes of the trouble which the British Government is facing in India to-day. Of course an earlier and deeper cause of India's unrest is the fact of her condition as a subject nation, her peoples' indignation that they, a great civilized nation with a proud past, should be held by force of arms in subjection to a foreign Power. But, now, that primary sense of wrong is reinforced by as keen a sense of this new injustice, this new humiliation and insult that has been inflicted upon the whole Mohammedan world—Britain's treatment of Turkey and the Khalifate. Virtually the whole population of India, Mohammedan and Hindu alike, is seething with such unrest and such distrust of England as it has never known before. I am, etc.,

New York City.

J. T. SUNDERLAND.

A TALE OF TWO CITIES.

SIRS: I am glad to see that unlike many of your Anglo-American contemporaries you suffer from no romantic illusions about France. French policy at present is a danger to the world. It must everywhere be rigorously opposed unless Europe is to go under for ever. British policy is also detestable—or rather the absence of it, for there is no consistent British policy under Mr. Lloyd George—but on the whole its tendency is much less dangerous than that of the French. We who are internationalists do not, of course, care a brass button for any "national interests," British or American or any other, but we do care about the general interest of humanity. It is increasingly plain that French militarism is more dangerous than the German type was, if only because the French are naturally a warlike people, as the Germans are not and never have been. The talk about war being the Prussian industry is all buncombe, and a good many people are beginning to wake up to that fact at last. Here in Europe we are facing a winter of famine, Central Europe is in actual danger of ceasing to exist. French policy is mainly responsible for this horrible ruin. The militarists of France, aided and abetted by militarists everywhere, want to destroy Germany completely and seem not to care if they destroy the rest of Europe with it. They are mad. The economic restoration of Germany is essential to the life and well-being of the rest of Europe, and the French imperialists, who rule the roost in Paris, are doing their utmost to make the economic restoration of Germany impossible.

This domination of the military clique is of course destroying France too. Everybody is saying that the people have entirely changed from what they were before the war. In Paris there is very little intellectual life of any sort. The people everywhere seem to be thoroughly exhausted physically, morally and intellectually. In London, on the other hand, things are much more alive than they were before the war. The two European countries that are getting out of the old ruts are England and Italy, just now especially Italy. In England there is a great deal of revolutionary feeling among the workers, probably more than in any other European country except Italy.

The change that has come over England during the last six years is astonishing; it affects every class and every part of life. All traditions are disappearing. The slump in religion is amazing. The change is probably not evident to outsiders, as, after our usual manner, we continue to preserve the form while we scrap the substance, and do lip-service to traditions in which we have wholly ceased to believe. There is a delightful intellectual activity everywhere and the number of English people in the bourgeoisie who are sympathetic to revolutionary ideas is considerable. Travelling from London to Paris nowadays one realizes more than ever how conservative and backward-looking France is. She is living in the reign of Charles X. I am, etc.,

London, England.

A. LONDENOYS.

DR. ELIOT'S INCURABLE MORALITY.

SIRS: We have moralized the saloon out of existence, all except the "speak-easy"; we have moralized entertainment into extinction on Sunday, all except the movies, the Rev. Dr. John Roach Straton and "sacred" concerts; and now comes Dr. Charles W. Eliot, president-emeritus of Harvard University, with a new and more terrible discovery than any that has yet been inflicted upon us. It is, that the real issues of the presidential election are moral issues. Not content with asserting this discovery in that engine of intellectuality, the *Atlantic Monthly*, he has blazoned it abroad in the *New York Evening Post*. So that we all know by this time that in the coming election there will be two and only two groups of people. There will be those who are right and walk with Dr. Eliot, the Lowells and God; and there will be those who are wrong. It will be the awful prerogative of voters to moralize out of existence all those who are wrong together with the candidates and the parties thereof.

For the benefit of those benighted souls who still thought government had to do with oil—Mexican or Near-Eastern—with shipping trade, labour or any of the phases of the life of the world as we know it, Dr. Eliot has an unfailing reply: that there is a simple moral choice before the American people, that they will vote for darkness or for light, for good or for bad, for world-leadership and world-helpfulness, or for dishonour and cowardly self-seeking, in short, for Cox or for Harding. It is the covenant and treaty which have roused the moral fervour of this leading American. The covenant and treaty are the acid by which Dr. Eliot tries who is right: President Wilson or the Republican Senators who have op-

posed him. For ammunition Dr. Eliot turns to President Wilson's ideals which he exhumes from the addresses and messages in which they are imbedded.

It is Dr. Eliot's method that is interesting, not his conclusion. Some millions of voters will agree with him that President Wilson should be justified by the election of Cox. But one wonders how many will persuade themselves that they are crusaders for right, will read the devastatingly noble sentences which Dr. Eliot has culled from the addresses of Mr. Wilson and mistake the warm feeling of righteousness they evoke for a reality within reach of a ballot. For what President Wilson said is not only the text of Dr. Eliot's discussion; it is accepted uncritically as representing the state of the world which voters must envisage. All the old phraseology, upon which the liberals drifted to what they fondly imagined would be mastery, is rehearsed: we have the President believing in a world made safe for democracy, in the right of every people—*pace* Haiti and some others—to choose the sovereignty under which it shall live; we have glory shining in the face of the people, the rights of mankind, the future peace and security of the world—all of these phrases on parade accompanied by parallels of the criticism directed against George Washington and those directed by Republican opponents against President Wilson. The Republicans have no faith, not even in the magnanimity and disinterestedness of the American people: "One of the most outrageous of their slanders," says Dr. Eliot, "against the people of the United States was their statement that Americans would never accept any mandate on behalf of Armenia." Imagine the brisk, intelligent voter of Missoula, Montana, resenting that slander.

It is a moralist who writes. The moralist realizes that the man who wrote the noble sentences he quotes is not above criticism. In fact, Dr. Eliot mentions insincerity, shiftiness, bad choice of counsellors, inconstancy as being among the qualities with which President Wilson has been taxed by the wicked Republicans. But a moralist is equal to anything. If the voter finds President Wilson's character so repugnant that he can not vote for anything attributable to him, why not eliminate President Wilson's character and conduct as issues in the election. Vote on this abstract thing, these policies and ideals which have reference neither to the man who promulgated them nor to the world to which they were presumably to be applied. Then, as a voter, one may preen oneself on the morality of justifying something which is essentially right and repudiating what is wrong. One will have made the simple moral assertion which, according to Dr. Eliot, confronts all voters.

There are, however, a few Americans who would not see moral victory or defeat in the election of Cox or Harding. These Americans are conscious of certain moral issues focussed in the person of Mr. Eugene Debs in Atlanta Penitentiary; and of certain other moral questions contingent upon the inspired lying which emanated from the peace conference—of so many moral questions, in fact, that the resultant is neither simple nor moral. For them such an exhibition as Dr. Eliot's archaic assumption that words of politicians are to be taken at their face value, that campaign documents or treaties are worth the paper they are printed upon, will be one of the curiosities of a waning age. They will marvel at his balancing of Republican and Democratic parties as though those parties represented any of the stirrings which are changing the world. They will realize that the exclusion of subtlety from Dr. Eliot's processes of thought, the rigidity with which words are made to conceal the shifting movement of an expressive and a dangerous age, are the measure of his own craving for justification. His pleas are religiosity gone astray into politics.

Fancy, having in mind the Democratic party's dependence upon mobbism in the South to prevent the Negroes from voting, talking about the Democratic party's sensitiveness to the needs and aspirations of depressed classes in human society and its possessing a more practical sense of brotherhood than the Republican party! This twaddle all comes of the need for being righteous and of making simple moral issues for presidential elections. It is a disease of which Americans can hardly hope to be relieved until there is a little more of warmth and corruption and cynicism in their personal lives; until a wholesome laughter drives the manner of the pulpit from public affairs; until, finally, Americans relinquish the painful effort to seem too good for and therefore quite blind to the world they have to live in. I am, etc.,

New York City.

HERBERT J. SELIGMANN.

BOOKS.

CONTEMPORARY FRENCH WRITERS.

In her pre-war preface to "Twentieth Century French Writers" Mme. Duclaux says that she has "plumped" for the daring apostles of Life, those who cultivate movement and liberty rather than Art"; but somehow she has not plumped with an utter whole-heartedness. If not a Frenchwoman, she is still ardently partisan in her French sympathies, and there are certain apostles whom she recognizes scantily because the war has tended to colour her judgments. In her later preface she travels by a roundabout route to attack Romain Rolland's "Colas Breugnon" with the quite transparent purpose of making sharper the barb which she flings at this writer because of "Au Dessus de la Mêlée." She speaks coldly of the "unchanged, inconspicuous André Gide." And her enthusiasms are visibly augmented as well as diminished. She is immensely satisfied with her appreciative essay on Barrès, written before the war, because this writer has so obviously taken his place as a Frenchman and a patriot. His "Service de l'Allemagne" and "Colette Baudouche" are rungs of the ladder up which he has climbed. To Barrès she now gives a first importance. But it is in discussing Charles Péguy that the blurring effect of her war-emotionalism becomes most apparent. In her second preface she speaks of an early study of Péguy, "conceived in a mood of freakish pleasantries which might be permitted towards a man much younger than myself, with a great future before him, but which is not possible in speaking of a poet, dead, who died a martyr and a hero." So she has ruled out the sketch, which must have had its charm, and has substituted an essay which she considers to be somewhat more fitting in tone. Indeed it seems not unlikely that Mme. Duclaux has inserted or substituted later judgments, obviously a little biased, throughout the book.

But the kind of susceptibility which shows so plainly, almost naively, in her modifications is precisely the general quality which gives her volume its value as an introduction to her group of contemporary French writers. Her essays are bundles of impressions gathered through many contacts, a wide reading, a wide experience. They belong to a French manner of criticism, often using freely material which English critics would seldom or never use in writing of living subjects, as in the extraordinarily frank study of the life and development of Mme. Colette; they are always fresh and ardent and intimate; and if they are almost wholly personal, at their best they also reach through to personalities; they analyse character and temperament as mainsprings in literary production, and they succeed in creating a new and lively interest in the writers discussed. Mme. Duclaux hits off Francis Jammes as a "faun who has turned Franciscan friar," gives an easy running comment on his poetry, revealing sufficiently its charm; and significantly introduces the absurd interview which Jammes once granted to the *Temps*, when he related in an ecstasy of egoism his conversion through Paul Claudel. The picture if loose is fairly complete. There is a brilliant portrait of the highly feminine and uncontrolled talent of Mme. de Noailles. If Péguy was a martyr, still his difficult mind is here subjected to an intensive analysis; the essay reads like an inspired preliminary study for a work of fiction, with its portrayal of Péguy's relentless absorption in religion, his combined didacticism and delicacy of sentiment, his vanity, and finally of the impasse which he reached in his relation to his family and his church because of the force of his beliefs. There is a trenchant discussion of Rostand. The production of women novelists like Mme. Tinayre and Mlle. Lenéru is illuminated by a rapid commentary on fundamental interests and motives in their work. Two excellent summarizing chapters on special aspects of fiction, "The Pastoral Novel" and "The Novel of Childhood," are included; and these have much of the personal quality of

¹ "Twentieth Century French Writers." Madame Mary Duclaux. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

the single studies. They are rich in their background, fairly full and illusive, even though their comment is rapid.

The book has its insufficiencies of judgment, of course, apart from those created by an encroaching patriotism. A writer like Mme. Duclaux could hardly fail to have her exclusions, her too ready enthusiasms. Barrès is to her not only too great but too mysterious a figure. She exalts Claudel and seems not to see that his exotic mysticism is closely related to that of a large circle of French writers, that he is often more absorbed in working out curious situations which fit curious ideas than in evolving the stuff of his writing from a direct, overwhelming perception of the quality of life. She fails to get Barbusse's full achievement. She has little to do with general tendencies, though she contrives to make convincing her contention that for the writers of her fairly catholic group the invisible exists. But her defects are obvious; they spring readily from her qualities. She is interested in her chosen writers as complex individuals. As highly differentiated individuals she presents them; and in reaching for the core of personality she accomplishes something which is vital to criticism.

CONSTANCE MAYFIELD ROURKE.

A VERY MODERN LEDA.

MUCH ado has been made in London lately about Mr. Huxley's poetry. Readers of his new volume, "Leda," may perhaps detect the fact that Mr. Huxley is the writer of a very brilliant, sophisticated, disillusioned, fanciful, and satirical kind of prose. As a poet he is negligible, for the reason that so many of his English contemporaries are negligible. That is to say, he writes, not as he feels he must write, or as he can not help writing, but as a certain tradition, which he has deliberately chosen, forces him to write.

The tradition, in Mr. Huxley's case, was founded by Rupert Brooke. Most of us remember Brooke now as the writer of "The Great Lover," of the 1914 sonnets, or of "Dust." But there was also another Brooke, the writer of "Libido," "Jealousy," "A Channel Passage," "Wagner," "Dawn." These poems were clearly an attempt to provide the reading public with new subject matter handled in the old way. Brooke carefully avoided the task of inventing new forms to fit his new subjects, and apparently, at this stage of his career, considered that there was nothing to say on the old themes. So he poured his wine into the old bottles, with the result that those who held that good versification makes good poetry were satisfied, while those who were likely to read poetry for the sake of finding something shocking or startling were equally satisfied. The same infallible recipe has been largely followed by Mr. Huxley.

I do not wish the last statement to be taken literally as an assertion that Mr. Huxley has no individuality of his own. He has, and this individuality of his is manifested by a colder, more deliberately ironic, more sceptical attitude toward his subject-matter than Brooke possessed. Had Brooke survived the war, it is quite possible that he might have written in this style. Mr. Huxley stands in relation to the dead poet much as the writers of the Restoration stood in relation to those of the early seventeenth century. As with the Restoration men, his best field already lies in the direction of prose satire. The prose poems in this book have, despite their indebtedness to Baudelaire, Laforgue, and Rimbaud, a definitely acrid quality of their own; and Mr. Huxley's prose book is vastly superior to anything contained in this volume. So far as he is a poet at all, his merits or demerits can be tested only by the poem which gives the book its title.

This poem, "Leda," must be conceded to be a monstrously clever performance. Mr. Huxley has obviously been blessed with a certain facility of versification, to which he has added a wide range of reading. He knows the stock poetic touches by heart, and can reel them off to fit any occasion. He can even better them at times, as in the description of the swan's feather floating down-

wards, which Leda sees. But, for the most part, all these touches are subsidiary and have little to do with the main drift of the poem, which is a consciously carried out attempt to rationalize Greek mythology. Jove, therefore, is depicted as sweating and rolling about in his bed in a perfect agony of suppressed sexuality; Aphrodite reads love-epistles that sound like echoes from the Palatine Anthology; and Leda is made to offer the swan the protection of her body, because it is being chased by an eagle. The trouble with the whole thing is that it is neither Greek nor modern. Its "morality," or "immorality," has nothing to do with it. We are interested in the old myth, an entirely unmoral story, precisely because it explains nothing. The new attempt to explain the passions of a Greek god under the terms of a modern man's reactions and disgusts, and to define Leda's yielding as being prompted by humanitarian impulses, is bound to fail, because both characters are made utterly unconvincing thereby. Mr. Huxley has neither the courage to love his themes for their own sakes nor the imagination to get the better of them; therefore, he is not a poet, although every line of his book displays a determination to write something better than the conventional prettifications which people usually call poetry.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

ENGLAND'S INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

DR. USHER'S "Industrial History of England" is issued with a publisher's note, which promises the story of England's industrial development during the past nine hundred years, told with such special attention to social and labour questions as to ensure a resulting "clear understanding of the major problems of to-day." The wide reference is proper if the reader is to have a sympathetic understanding of modern England; and from this standpoint Dr. Usher's book calls for criticism here, on the basis of the publisher's professions.

English industrialism, is, primarily, a consequence of certain philosophic ideas, but the author fails to comprehend this major fact, not from any lack of knowledge of the complexities of economic organization, but rather, one surmises, because such intricacies are too much for him. He has not seen the wood for the trees, and he fears generalizations—except the one implied throughout the book, that there are no generalizations possible.

The key to the modern history of English industry is the change in ideas which came about during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Though only imperfectly realized, the conceptions which for a long period regulated economic life in mediæval England were morally worthy; they directed social activities to common social ends which for the thought of the time had a universal and religious significance. But in the seventeenth, and increasingly in the eighteenth century, the balance between service and freedom, between rights and obligations—which was the dominant idea in mediæval social arrangements—was upset; and in the process of change, the idea of social purposes as something deliberately to be aimed at was lost sight of; the free play of individual rights, which an obsolete system has come to repress unduly, became the gospel of a form of fetish-worship of extraordinary power and the most appalling consequences. The result was the destruction of a social order without another being substituted for it; the early nineteenth century possessed no social structure deserving of the name of order. The subsequent period is, in the literal sense of the word, a reaction, in the form of one long fight on the part of democracy for the physical basis of life; this secured, the struggle became explicitly, what it has always implicitly been, one for freedom. To-day the problem that both underlies and overshadows all other aspects of industry is not a new problem—except in degree, and because of the thoughts and feelings engendered by the war period; it is the problem to which expression is given by the ever-increasing numbers who, in their dif-

¹ "Leda." Aldous Huxley. New York: George H. Doran Co.

² "The Industrial History of England." Albert P. Usher. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

ferent ways, are asking how, instead of being left to the autocratic control of a small minority from whom no corresponding social justification is required, industry may be organized both democratically and for the service of the community.

In order to understand the present industrial situation in England these things must be kept in mind. But it is just in this respect that Dr. Usher's book is wanting. Not only does it fail to give an explanation of "the major problems of the day"; there is nowhere a clear indication that the author realizes the outstanding problem of industry in England to-day. The references to the wider social aspects of England's industrial development are so disjointed and so unilluminating as not to afford a basis for judgment as to the present industrial situation in England. As typical there may be taken the treatment of what Huxley called "administrative nihilism," which can be explained only from the author's failure to appreciate English thought of a hundred years ago, and of to-day; for "administrative nihilism" is by no means dead. Again, Dr. Usher apparently does not know the English labour-movement and, in addition, does not know enough about it to give an appearance of reality to his description. He does not appreciate how very little influence the "logical" school of socialists has ever had in England. There are very important modern developments which he neglects to mention, the great Co-operative Movement for example and the growth of municipal undertakings.

To mention such sins of omission may appear unfair since, in a volume designed as an introduction to the subject, something, it might justly be said, must be sacrificed. This is obviously true, but it is important what one sacrifices; and as Dr. Usher deals with certain parts of his subject in an able manner one can not but feel that if he had concentrated upon the external aspects of English industrial developments—that is, upon matters of technique and forms of organization—he would have written a better and a more readable book. His treatment of the development of certain industries is excellent and might well have been extended both in regard to the number of industries and the question of time.

Dr. Usher—rightly enough, so far as technical achievement is concerned—contends that the period of the Industrial Revolution is not yet ended, though this view is not so unconventional as he appears to consider it. He does well to bring out, as few economic historians do, the dependence of industrial development upon technical advance and might with advantage have expanded this side of his treatment so as to assign to each stage of his extended period its own characteristic addition to technical achievement.

A somewhat serious error occurs in the account of factory-legislation in England, where the author states that the conditions of work of adult men are not regulated. Conditions other than hours are regulated under the Factory Acts, and hours are regulated in the case of mines. There is no mention of the Trade Boards Acts, though in their essence these are similar to factory-legislation. Under these acts the rates of wages of both men and women are regulated and so, indirectly, by the imposition of overtime rates, are their hours of work.

A bibliography is added in which the student will find most of the standard works. There are, however, some curious omissions. For anyone beginning the study of English industrial history, the most important book of all is the volume of "Select Documents" edited by Bland, Brown and Tawney, which is not included. R. W.

SHORTER NOTICES.

A PUBLIC rendered exacting by the movies will find its appetite for action well satisfied in the pages of Mr. L. Frank Tooker's "The Middle Passage."¹ It would be difficult to conceive a larger measure of incident bestowed upon a narrative of average length than Mr. Tooker has managed to pack into this thrilling story of the slave-trade. And yet the tale can not be dismissed with the simple label of adventure-story, for

with all its sea-faring and ship-wrecks, its glimpses of strange coasts, and its physical encounters, it retains a certain value as a picture of life in an era which to-day is as remote as Babylon. Mr. Tooker is an alert and companionable storyteller—a disciple of Conrad in action, though not in atmosphere. L. B.

THE world is becoming so cluttered with unsolved crime-mysteries—from mighty bomb-plots to merest murder—that the public may yet be compelled to call in the writers of fiction to dispel its mood of scepticism. Just as we are all reaching the conclusion that detectives live to be baffled and policemen exist to be eluded, along comes a volume of "Famous Detective Stories,"² and with a sigh of relief, we plunge into a revel of ravel, secure in the knowledge that no matter how tangled the plot, it will yield its secret in the end. This compilation brings the masters of crime and the masters of detection into exciting proximity, and the eleven tales—ranging from Poe and Gaboriau to Arthur B. Reeve and Anna Katherine Green—present as compact and varied an assortment of thrills as any reader could desire. L. B.

SADAKICHI HARTMANN is one of the most picturesque intellectual vagrants in this country. As an art critic and literary artisan he has never received his deserts, and of late he has been quite lost in the American limbo. "The Last Thirty Days of Christ"³ is unlikely to presage his re-emergence. It purports to be the realistic, humorous, semi-sceptical diary of Lebbeus, a follower of Jesus. The intention seems to have been to reconstruct a Christ with a sublimated sex-urge, a compelling technique for public speaking, a natural but extraordinary skill at healing, and many human, all-too-human, traits. But the miracles are clumsily explained and the disciples are petty and quarrelsome: the lens through which Hartmann's temperament has peered at the New Testament is poorly ground, befogged and out of focus. Hence, the reader discerns the strong lights but imperfectly and suffers uneasily from a dissipation of emotion. G. B. M.

THE public appetite for series of biographies will find itself freshly catered to in a new allotment, under the group designation of "Figures from American History." The series follows no chronological order and, if one is to judge from the first two volumes, its emphasis will be along political and legislative lines. As a historical series, the books will supplement, but are not likely to supplant their predecessors. Professor Ford's "Alexander Hamilton" is a straightforward, unbiased recital, in which the author keeps clear of that tendency of certain earlier historians to treat the ancient history of the republic "as a drama of creation in which Hamilton and Jefferson figured as Ormuzd and Ahriman." The book is unwarmed by any glow of imagination, however, a failing which leads the author to remark: "It is an astonishing proof of Hamilton's vocation for statesmanship that at the very time he was courting his sweetheart he produced the remarkable papers described in the preceding chapter." The volume on Stephen A. Douglas is the work of Mr. Louis Howland, an Indianapolis editor. The fiery career of the Democratic leader is set forth sympathetically and serves as the occasion for a detailed résumé of the legislative side of the anti-slavery struggle. The book is an interesting contribution to a field of American history which loses none of its fascination with the passing of years. L. B.

A REVIEWER'S NOTE-BOOK.

HALF a century or more ago there sprang up a school of painting in this country of which Bierstadt's "Rocky Mountains" is perhaps the best-remembered example. The painters of this school devoted themselves, as they said, to recording the glories of Western scenery; and anyone who has met one of these painters and talked with him (they were hardy men, who long outlived their early vogue) knows how sincere they were. They were deeply impressed by this Western scenery, they had a natural affection for the grandiose, they were as much interested in rock-formations as ever a geologist was. Moreover, they had a love for sound and honest workmanship, as they called it, that put one in mind of those old artisans of New England who made the clocks, the

¹ "Famous Detective Stories." Edited by J. Walker McSpadden. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co.

² "The Last Thirty Days of Christ." Sadakichi Hartmann. New York: Privately Printed.

³ "Alexander Hamilton." Henry Jones Ford. "Stephen A. Douglas." Louis Howland. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

¹ "The Middle Passage." L. Frank Tooker. New York: The Century Co.

chairs and the highboys we like to surround ourselves with to-day.

THEY were also astute men of business. In those days the Western railways were just being built, and the art of the poster, which beguiles the tourist, was unknown. What shrewder idea could the builders of the railways have had than to engage these same painters to picture these same glories of the West (in a haze of rainbows and pink sunsets) and to have their panoramas hung in appropriate public places? What, for that matter, could have been more patriotic? It was done. In the Capitol at Washington, in the State capitols, wherever men foregathered in the East, the "beauty spots" of America began to appear on the walls. How much did the westward progress of our people in the middle of the century owe to the entrancing lure of these pictures! More than a little, one has reason to think. At least it can be said that while American artists, like others, have died in poverty and neglect, those who devoted themselves in the old days to furthering the course of empire reaped an imperial reward.

IN spite of what is sometimes said, we have a literary and artistic tradition in America; and these old painters were purely of it. We are not so very proud of them to-day, to be sure, in spite of a workmanship that would have done them greater honour, in critical eyes, if it had been devoted to a humbler end—cabinet-making, for example; nevertheless, theirs was the true momentum of our national art. Robert Fulton and Samuel Morse were painters also, and they went even further; they abandoned their art altogether, or let it drop into second place, because the course of empire demanded invention and they, according to the lights of those days, were patriots too. But the momentum has been scarcely less evident in those who, within the American tradition, have remained artists and writers; they have always, consciously or unconsciously, held it as their office to serve not human but national ideals, or, to speak more accurately, national exigencies.

LET me quote my authority. "To write the intellectual history of America from the modern æsthetic standpoint," say the authors of the "Cambridge History of American Literature" in their preface, "is to miss precisely what makes it significant among modern literatures, namely, that for two centuries the main energy of Americans went into exploration, settlement, labour for subsistence, religion and statecraft." Whether a literature or an art can be significant that begs to be excused from an æsthetic test is a question which only American historians can solve, for only American historians could have raised it: knowing as one does that American literature is not significant among modern literatures, one must in candour perceive that it is precisely because of this submission to "historical necessity." When people make a virtue of necessity, they lose what power they have as human beings of controlling or at least evading necessity, and that is what these historians have done: by telling Americans that they can have, and have had, a literature under conditions that plainly make a literature impossible, they at once remove the incentive to change these conditions and, by debasing the notion of literature itself, destroy whatever impulse the individual writer might have to seek other conditions, in this wide world, under which the production of literature is really possible. But the authors of the "Cambridge History" have shown us very clearly what the American tradition is, in justifying it, and that is why I have quoted them here. Those old painters who glorified the West and reaped their reward were the "genuine Americans": they are as clearly entitled to a place in our national pantheon as, for example, Mr. George Creel.

BUT let us understand this tradition. What have we wanted an art and literature for? A feather to stick in

our cap? To show Europeans that we could turn a trick as well as they? Our desire has been more pathetic than that, on the one hand, and less ingenuous, on the other. It is pathetic how eager we have been to have our self-esteem bolstered up, to be assured that we are the best of all possible races, and that Providence gave us Niagara and the Yosemite because we alone deserved it. That is one way of looking at the "Connecticut Yankee" and those rosy novels of Mr. Howells, who, in all innocent sincerity, manipulated his characters in such a way as to give the Americans a monopoly of grace, honesty and fortune's favour. But innocent as this art has been, something not so innocent has been mingled with it; something very like vanity and brag with an ulterior purpose. To go back to those old painters and their "glories of the West," would they have spent their lives painting those glories, quite so rosy and with such devotion, of their own will, even their own "patriotic" will, if the officials of the railways had not been so eager to reward them for doing so? In short, what is behind this self-abnegation of American writers and artists, this desire to be so "genuinely" American, this willing elusion of the æsthetic test, this cheerful readiness to serve their country by painting it all *couleur de rose*? One seems to detect in it, on a grand scale, what we are so familiar with in every boom-town in the West. To attract immigrants and settlers and to convince them, after we have got them, that they have lost nothing in losing their civilization, and have gained paradise by it—is not that an element, let us say, in the purpose, the quite unconscious purpose, of this tradition of ours? And who can deny that our writers and our artists have been successful? We have achieved our paradise. As for civilization, we are in little danger from that. So long as a nation hums with self-complacency, it may count itself secure.

AND besides, this tradition is protean: it is born again every day. Mr. St. John Ervine has just been observing that "all over the United States one finds little groups of writers who are labouring to make an American literature with the peculiar flavour of their own State. . . . At Cape Cod, young Americans, led by Mr. Eugene O'Neill, are trying to create an American drama that can not be mistaken for any other than an American drama." I think Mr. Ervine is mistaken in one detail; I doubt if Mr. O'Neill has any such patriotic intention; but Mr. Ervine's other phrases have a strangely familiar ring. It is a discovery of certain philosophers that happiness is a by-product of something else, and that the more directly we pursue it, the less likely we are to get it. The same thing surely is true of a national literature, which begins to have significance only when it ceases to serve ulterior purposes and expresses individual spirits. As long as we deliberately will "an American drama that can not be mistaken for any other than an American drama," as long as we insist upon a fiction that "presents American characters in American conditions," our tradition is safe; the instinct of the pioneer land-agent still animates us. We are not as eager as we once were for immigrants and settlers, and so we are able to dispense with a little of the rosy glow; we no longer care to show the world that even if we lack manners we have mountains. What we want to show the world now is that we have a literature. Could the author of the "Columbiad" have asked more of us than that, if he were living to-day?

THE Reviewer recommends the following recent books to the notice of readers of the *Freeman*:

"The House of Dust," by Conrad Aiken. Boston: The Four Seas Co.

"Margaret Fuller: a Psychological Biography," by Katherine Anthony. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

"In Morocco," by Edith Wharton. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

"Latin-American Mythology," by Hartley Burr Alexander. Boston: Marshall Jones Co.

"The New Adam," by Louis Untermeyer. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

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